

Bożena Górską-Poręcka
The University of Warsaw

THE ROLE OF TEACHER KNOWLEDGE IN ESP COURSE DESIGN

Abstract. English for specific purposes (ESP) has been conceptualized by its leading scholars, like Hutchinson and Waters (1987) or Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), as a multi-stage process, where the ESP practitioner fulfils a variety of roles, including that of learner needs researcher, course designer, language instructor, learning assessor, and course evaluator. The performance of these roles requires considerable knowledge of a linguistic, socio-cultural and pedagogical nature, necessary to inform the teacher's cognitive processes, particularly those involved in course decision making. The necessary professional knowledge of the ESP teacher, which is gained through professional schooling, teacher training, and teaching experience, comprises both relevant theoretical concepts (knowing what) and performance skills (knowing how). It directly impacts on all stages of the ESP process, namely the planning, design, teaching, assessment and evaluation of a course, largely determining its quality. The present paper focuses on ESP teacher cognition, especially those cognitions (i.e. knowledge and beliefs) that are involved in course design, informing the teacher's choices of course parameters and instructional practices. Elaborating on the concepts developed by language cognition scholars, like Shulman (1987), Andrews (e.g. 2007), and Borg (e.g. 2006), the author tries to outline the internal structure of ESP teacher cognition and describe the function of each subordinate knowledge base. The paper also presents the preliminary results of a small-scale exploratory study into the professional cognition of 13 teachers of Legal and Business English employed at the University of Warsaw.

Keywords: English for specific purposes, teacher cognition, teacher knowledge, professional knowledge base, teacher decision making, course design

English for specific purposes (ESP) is universally recognized as a truly learner-centered type of language instruction, distinguished from other approaches by 'a commitment to the goal of providing language instruction that addresses students' own specific purposes' (Belcher, 2009:2), related to employment or education. In order to exhibit these distinctive variables, an ESP course must be focused on the learners' occupational or educational reasons to learn, have content that is relevant to the learners' target language and communication needs, and be oriented towards the destination

(learning outcomes) to which the learners are to be taken in order to become communicatively proficient in a given professional or disciplinary specialist discourse. Yet despite being so needs-relevant and goal-oriented, somewhat paradoxically, the most learner-centered type of language instruction is also the most teacher dependent, and at times even teacher controlled, especially in some educational contexts where input from learners and other stakeholders tends to be limited and teacher autonomy is considerably high, such as tertiary EFL contexts. The reason for the teacher dependence of ESP is simple: nowhere in English language teaching is the teacher's impact on course design and course effectiveness greater than in ESP.

A Conceptualization of ESP Teacher Cognition

It should be noted that the teacher dependence of ESP is not environmental but purely ontological in nature, because it derives from the general conceptualization of specific purpose language instruction as a complex process, which starts with preparation for planning and designing a course to be taught and ends with evaluation of the course taught, involving the teacher as the principal actor in all its stages. There seems to be a consensus among leading scholars like Robinson (1991) or Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) that the ESP process consists of five key stages: needs analysis, course design, teaching and learning, assessment, and evaluation. Each of these stages places considerable demands on the ESP practitioner, who is required to play not one, obvious role of the language teacher, viewed, alternatively, as knowledge provider or learning facilitator, but five highly complex roles, corresponding to the key stages of the ESP process. Thus, in the needs-analysis stage, the ESP teacher plays the role of a researcher assessing the learners' present and target language and communication needs, analyzing their affective, cognitive and social factors, and in addition – acting as a language analyst describing the targeted domain-specific language use in linguistic, pragmatic, and socio-cultural terms. Next, in the course design stage, the ESP practitioner has to plan course goals and objectives (learning outcomes) and set the course parameters of content and methodology, before embarking on the task of actual course development, involving syllabus design and materials development. In the subsequent stage, the ESP teacher finally has the chance to provide needs-relevant language instruction and to facilitate and mediate learning of the targeted, domain-specific use of English as a foreign or second language, acting as both the primary knower and the exemplary user of the target language and

its specialist subset. Then, in the assessment stage, the ESP practitioner is required to grade the learners' classroom performance and their overall learning progress, which involves writing achievement tests and developing graded classroom communicative activities. While learner assessment is a natural part of any teaching, in ESP it is perhaps more challenging than in other types of English language teaching (ELT) as it requires considerable knowledge of the discourse and practices of the target group, in which the language teacher is but a knowledgeable outsider. Finally, in the course evaluation stage, the teacher needs to constructively reflect on his or her own work as a needs analyst, course designer, language instructor, and learning assessor in order to be able to re-design the course or its parts in order to make it more focused on learner needs and thus – more effective.

The number and complexity of teacher roles (of which only target situation analysis and the targeted specialist discourse description can be 'outsourced' to experts) attest to the great impact that teachers have on the scope and organization, as well as overall effectiveness of ESP courses, which is typically viewed as either fitness for (learner) purpose or effective transformation of language learners into communicatively competent language users (see Harvey & Knight, 1996 for conceptions of quality in higher education). The multiplicity of teacher roles also suggests the formative influence of ESP teachers' psychological (cognitive and affective) and social variables on their actual teaching practice. Specifically, viewed in the post-behaviorist terms of either cognitivism or social constructivism, all teaching, including language teaching, can be conceptualized as thoughtful behavior informed by teachers' professional and pedagogical knowledge, and involving various cognitive processes, such as information processing, judgment formation, and decision making. In the case of language teachers, the professional knowledge system, which is both mentally and socially constructed and reconstructed in a continual fashion, consists of various cognitions, comprising learned theoretical (declarative) knowledge, acquired practical (procedural) knowledge, and experience-based beliefs and conceptions about language, language use, language learning, language learners, language teaching, and language teachers, including the teacher's mindset or an implicit conception of self as an individual and a professional (see Dweck, 2006 for the concept of mindset).

The idea of teacher cognition as affecting the teaching process was first posited by Shulman (1987), who encapsulated it in the overreaching concept of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), covering all professional knowledge bases and job-related individual beliefs and assumptions held by teach-

ers. In the last three decades this and similar conceptualizations of teacher cognition have been developed and empirically investigated by teacher cognition researchers. Naturally, utmost attention has been given to language teachers' subject matter knowledge, which has been described and investigated as teacher language awareness (TLA) by such researchers as Andrews (e.g. 1997, 2001, 2003, 2007) and Van Lier (e.g. 1995), or, alternatively, as knowledge about language (KAL) by Borg (e.g. 1999, 2003). Though the leading teacher cognition scholars differ in some minor details, all of them seem to agree on the general notion of TLA/KAL as 'the knowledge that teachers have of the underlying systems of the language that enables them to teach effectively' (Thornbury, 1997) by making them able to analyze language, understand how it works and explain it to learners. Central to this linguistic and metalinguistic awareness, which is seen as a property of expert language teachers, is "the sensitivity to grammatical, lexical and phonological features, and the effect on meaning brought about by the use of different forms" (Hales, 1997:217). Conceptualized as hinging on the sensitivity to and understanding of form-functional patterns, TLA/KAL is particularly relevant to ESP teaching, which by definition is concerned with language use, communicative proficiency, and the relationship between linguistic form and semantic or socio-semiotic meaning.

Unfortunately, the concept of TLA/KAL does not fully account for the subject matter cognition of the ESP teacher, who is engaged in a teaching enterprise involving also the realm of content studies, in addition to language and pedagogy. Consequently, the general knowledge system of an expert ESP teacher, or in other words his or her PCK, must contain an extra knowledge base with cognitions related to the basic facts, concepts, values and practices of the discipline or profession that a given type of ESP serves. Sadly, no leading teacher cognition researcher has yet undertaken a description of the professional knowledge of the ESP practitioner, probably because for most outsiders, teaching ESP is not truly different in kind to teaching English for general purpose (EGP), except for the need to contextualize input according to the learners' specificity. The task of conducting an inquiry into ESP teacher professional cognition is thus left to teacher-researchers, committed to improving the quality of their work by analyzing their own thinking, knowledge, and instructional practices.

However, before any exploratory study of ESP teacher cognition can be carried out, some theorizing about its scope, structure and role in the ESP process has to be done in order to set the scene. Building on the ideas of Shulman, Borg, Andrews and others, it may perhaps be argued that

the overall professional knowledge of ESP teachers (or their PCK) should be conceptualized as consisting of three knowledge bases: (1) the language knowledge base, comprising cognitions about language in general, the target language, and the specialist discourse taught; (2) the subject content knowledge base, containing at least basic-level cognitions about the academic discipline, profession or occupation to which the ESP taught is related; and (3) the pedagogical knowledge base, made up of cognitions about general and specific (language) pedagogy, including theories of learning. In more detail, the posited structure of ESP teachers' cognition might look as follows:

The language knowledge base

- Knowledge of the target language (TL) and the targeted specialist discourse, including declarative knowledge of the TL systems and procedural knowledge of relevant TL use;
- Teacher's own EFL and ESP learning experience, including exposure to and experience of various language classrooms, instructional practices, teaching methods, learning strategies etc., as well as experience-based beliefs and conceptions;
- Knowledge about the target language, comprising theories of language, theories of language use, theories of second language acquisition and learning, as well as overall language awareness of TL forms and meanings;
- Awareness of the TL culture with its shared values and social meanings;
- Linguistic research and language analysis expertise, including the procedural knowledge of linguistic, discourse, and genre analysis.

The subject content knowledge base

- Knowledge of the basic concepts and tenets of the discipline to which ESP is related;
- Awareness of the discipline culture, its basic values and typical practices (situations, activities, tasks);
- Familiarity with the discipline- or profession- specific discourse practices (typical speech acts and genres).

Knowledge of pedagogy

- Knowledge of general learning theories, educational psychology, and theories of motivation;
- Views of the learner and learner psychological and affective factors impacting language learning (learning strategies and motivation);

- Views of teaching and teacher role in the teaching and learning process (as the source of language knowledge or the facilitator and mediator of student learning);
- Knowledge of language teaching approaches, methods and techniques, as well as perceptions about their effectiveness;
- Knowledge of language classrooms and broader teaching contexts, especially about socio-cultural aspects of the learner and other stakeholder variables enhancing or impairing language learning.

As the above makes clear, teacher cognitions are not always easy to discern and classify, as some of them seem to belong in more than one category. For instance, the view of the language learner belongs simultaneously in the language knowledge base as part of the teacher's knowledge about language (and specifically – about second language learning) and in the specific pedagogical knowledge base as part of the teacher's knowledge of educational psychology and general learning theories. This and similar situations show that while the concept of ESP teachers' PCK as consisting of separate subordinate knowledge bases is useful as a framework for describing what an expert practitioner should know to be able to make informed course decisions and exhibit teaching practices that are conducive to ESP learning, in reality all teacher cognitions seem to be structured in a less orderly fashion, being more of an amalgam of relevant facts and beliefs, which are intertwined, interrelated and constantly interacting within one big professional knowledge system (see Turner-Bisset, 1999 for an amalgam conception of PCK). Furthermore, although the ESP teacher needs a broad professional knowledge system, it seems that individual cognitions are not used all at one time, but rather called upon whenever needed to enable information processing, judgment formation, problem solving or the decision making required in the process of course design or teaching.

As concerns the specific functions of the three subsystems of ESP teacher cognition identified above, it appears that TLA is active in all five stages of the ESP process, from needs analysis to course evaluation, whereas subject content knowledge is mainly used in the course design stage, particularly in syllabus and materials development, and pedagogical knowledge is chiefly used in the teaching and learning stage for the selection of classroom behaviors, but also in course design for the selection of teaching methods and techniques. It should be noted that all types of teacher cognition are used in course design, which is easily the most cognitively demanding stage of the ESP process, where all important course decisions about goals, objectives, content and methodology have to be made, and then translated into teachable and learnable chunks of input to be presented and practiced in

such a way as to ensure maximal learning intake. The largely intra-mental cognitive process of course design starts with interpreting the findings of the various needs analyses performed at the onset of course preparation, namely target situation analysis (TSA), which has identified the target domain specific language use in terms of typical situations, tasks, skills and texts; the target language description, consisting of linguistic, discourse or genre analysis of the identified typical texts, and the present situation analysis (PSA), which has determined the learners' language and communication shortcomings by measuring their current interlanguage and communicative competence against the target language and communication needs. These findings are then processed in order to establish the course needs or parameters of goals, objectives, content and methodology, which is done with reference to the findings of the remaining needs analyses conducted, i.e. learner factor analysis, which has established students' cognitive, affective and social variables that may impact the learning process, and teaching context analysis, which has diagnosed the specific learning situation, including the needs and demands of other stakeholders involved in the ESP enterprise. Collectively, it seems that the learner and contextual variables act as a socio-cultural filter, adjusting the identified target needs to a particular group of learners, taught in a particular setting by a particular teacher in order to maximize the effectiveness of the course. Afterwards, in the actual course design, the course needs are put together in the form of a syllabus organizing the language to be taught, or input, into structural units according to an adopted principle, where again decisions about materials and activities as well as the kind of classroom interaction to foster in the course are informed by teacher cognition.

A study into ESP teacher cognition

As the above discussion shows, ESP teacher cognition with its knowledge bases and processes is what makes course design as well as the teaching of ESP possible. Unfortunately, being intra-mental, it does not lend itself easily to scholarly inquiry. Most existing research is exploratory in nature and concerned predominantly with establishing effective teaching practices and the cognitive competences that underlie them by studying expert teachers. The preferred type of inquiry is a case study, where teacher cognition is researched by a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods like questionnaires, interviews, teacher narratives and essays, and classroom observation. Such methodology may be criticized as impossible to verify and

thus lacking in objectivism, hence some researchers try to objectify the procedure by using linguistic knowledge tests, in which teachers are asked to perform linguistic or discourse analysis of provided language samples or to identify specific linguistic or pragmatic features in order to effectively gauge their knowledge of the language systems, constituting the explicit (declarative) part of their language awareness, (see Borg, 2006 for an excellent review of teacher cognition research).

The study into ESP teacher cognition involved in the course design and teaching of academic courses of Legal and Business English undertaken by the author has been designed as a multi-method project, of which only a pilot study has been conducted so far. The project is aimed at establishing what types of cognitions are used by ESP teachers working in tertiary EFL contexts in designing their ESP courses, by asking them to answer various multiple-choice as well as open-ended questions, which in the author's opinion, based on relevant research, parallel those that aware teachers are bound to ask themselves while making decisions about course objectives, content, and methodology in order to choose options that best suit the learner type and the teaching context. The pilot study consisted of a three-part questionnaire, containing three groups of questions: about the teachers' social variables, their self-perception as ESP teachers, and their course design and teaching practices used in current ESP practice. The sample consisted of 13 experienced teachers of Legal English (8) and Business English (5), employed at the University of Warsaw. There were 11 women and 2 men in the group, with an average of 24 years experience in EFL teaching (13–40 years) and 18 years in ESP teaching (7–40 years). The respondents were non-native speakers of English, with a solid language education, as all held a Master's degree in English studies (11) or applied linguistics (2) and three were currently completing doctoral studies, but with little formal schooling in the disciplines to which their ESP courses were related, i.e. law and economics. Among the teachers of Business English, two had completed doctoral studies at the Warsaw School of Economics but had not written their doctoral dissertations, while only one teacher of Legal English had completed a non-degree law course of British and EU Law at the University of Warsaw. Interestingly, of the remaining 10 respondents only 4 claimed to have an interest in the discipline to which their ESP course was related, which would suggest that for almost 50%, the decision to undertake a given type of ESP was either accidental or motivated by non-cognitive factors, although such a conclusion appears to be inconsistent with the finding that 9 respondents were additionally involved in translation, 3 had conducted academic research, and 5 had authored an ESP course book or an e-learning

course, which would seem to suggest a genuine involvement with the type of ESP taught.

As concerns the respondents' perception of their job, 5 subjects saw themselves as EFL teachers, 3 as ESP practitioners, 3 as both, 0 as CLIL practitioners, and 2 as 'all of the above', including the CLIL teacher, which suggests that those questioned either do not fully distinguish between various types of ELT or adhere to a broad-angled view of ESP as not different in kind from EGP except for some learner specifism. Asked about their preferred teacher role in the classroom, a decisive majority of respondents said that they acted as a learning facilitator, followed by being a source of knowledge on a par with the more experienced EFL user, a more experienced member of the target community, and a teacher of non-linguistic subject content, with respective scores of 1.62, 2.8, 3.08, and 3.61 on a 5-point Likert scale of 1 (very relevant) – 5 (irrelevant). These scores may be seen as indicative of the classic view of ESP as wholly language-centered and also as demonstrating a relatively strong commitment to communicative teaching, in which the teacher is expected to facilitate and mediate students' learning rather than provide explicit (declarative) knowledge. Also, it seems that most of those questioned did not view the teaching of subject content as a necessary part of ESP because 8 respondents regarded it as entirely (7) or largely (1) irrelevant and only 4 saw it as very relevant (1) or relevant (3), which attests to the limited popularity of CLIL on the one hand and a tendency to view learners' specifism as context for linguistic input, rather than the type of input to be provided.

The questionnaire also yielded interesting results about the performance of specific ESP teacher roles in the form of a needs researcher, a course designer, a materials and activities developer, and a course evaluator. It turns out, that while all respondents claimed to have conducted some form of needs analysis at the onset of their course, only half did so routinely, and even then the assessment was limited to a student needs analysis (SNA), comprising elements of both present situation analysis and student factor analysis, which was conducted by 70% of respondents, while target needs analysis (TSA) was rarely done and by only 30% of the respondents, suggesting little knowledge of student objective target needs and an equally limited concern with making the course truly relevant to learner professional needs. This is partly justified by certain characteristics of the teaching context, where undergraduate students of law or economics have practically no current EFL needs, as a result of being in full time native-language education and generally pre-service, which means that an academic ESP course can only be focused on the students' delayed target needs, which

perhaps do not have to be teacher-analyzed, as they have been described by many experts and course book writers, whose insights can be used instead of carrying out one's own, expensive and time consuming target situation analysis. At the same time, most respondents designed their own course syllabus (75%), either all by themselves (Legal English teachers) or jointly (Business English teachers), but invariably with no collaboration from subject content teachers and a limited interest from departmental authorities. The remaining 25% admitted to using a syllabus borrowed from a course book, which they developed by adjusting the proposed materials and activities and adding original ones. Likewise, a decisive majority of respondents (85%) developed their own materials, i.e. selected and enhanced authentic materials, but only a third wrote them from scratch, which is hardly surprising in the case of non-native speakers. In search of appropriate input, about 65% used a compilation of several course books instead of a single one, which further attests to the respondents' considerable engagement in course design. All the respondents claimed to have designed their own output-generating activities, at least partly, with 60% saying that they did so always or usually and 40% choosing the option 'sometimes.' Finally, while all conducted some course evaluation, it usually took the form of the university's mandatory student course evaluation questionnaire, which is not particularly informative for ESP purposes, as it uses a standard evaluation form developed for all teachers. Only 38% carried out their own course evaluation at the end of selected parts of the course (either a semester or a year), which usually consisted of having the students complete a self-devised questionnaire intended to gauge their opinions about the objectives, content and methodology of the course, but sometimes taking the form of a class discussion. Summing up, it seems that by concentrating on designing their courses and teaching them effectively, rather than conducting an extensive needs analysis and course evaluation, those questioned adopted a convenient, but relatively narrow view of their profession, seeing themselves as ESP teachers rather than ESP practitioners. To some extent, self-conceptions of this kind may be seen as a logical corollary of the previously indicated ontological problem with discerning ESP from EGP and CLIL, with obvious consequences for the perception of the teacher's own role in the teaching process. However, a more plausible interpretation is that in a teaching context characterized by a limited interest in course design from any relevant stakeholders, including the students who often choose an ESP course according to class-schedule rather than cognitive preferences, the highly autonomous ESP teachers tend to do what is convenient for them and good enough for their students. The rationale for this attitude may

again be contextual, namely that taking any more effort than necessary, for instance getting involved in a large-scale target needs analysis, has to be done in the teachers' own time and budget and in all probability would not be acknowledged, let alone appreciated, by any university departments or units involved, either those organizing the studies in this particular subject, or those employing the teachers. As for psychological or affective reasons, some light should be shed on this and other teacher self-perception issues in a subsequent stage of the research project, when the respondents will be asked to provide metaphors describing ESP teaching, ESP teachers and ESP learners.

The last part of the questionnaire asked the respondents to describe an ESP course they are currently teaching at the university. Here the focus was on the decision making process involved in course design. Responding to a question about the course goals or general objectives, 92% of the respondents pointed to communicative competence (putting its socio-cultural component over the pragma-linguistic one), while only 23% indicated linguistic competence, which is consistent with the definition of ESP as language instruction concerned with language use and learner communicative proficiency. These results correlated with the respondents' choice of specific course objectives (learning outcomes), where teaching domain – specific vocabulary, functions or discourse were clearly favored over grammar teaching, indicating a focus on the form-function relationship, which is promoted in ESP, rather than on the linguistic form alone. At the same time, however, the teaching of disciplinary concepts was ranked considerably higher than the teaching of either target group (TG) culture or TL national culture, which may be interpreted as indicative of a cognitive rather than socio-cultural interest in the subject discipline and its practices. This may be attributed to the lack of practical experience of domain-specific practices and the related social-semiotics, as none of the teachers is even a peripheral member of the target group. This interpretation is supported by the respondents' definition of the language they teach in their ESP courses, which is seen as a subset of International English (EIL) owned by both L1 and L2 users rather than a subset of a national English owned by a country-based community of native speakers, where the former was selected by 50% of respondents and the latter by 34%, with the rest selecting both options.

As concerns the content taught, the English language or its specific subset was chosen by, respectively, 30% and 38% of the respondents, but the subject discipline (law or economics) was indicated by 58%, and the targeted professional culture by 7.5%, which means that for an estimated one third to a half of the respondents, ESP consists of teaching both language

and subject content, even if reduced to basic concepts and practices and not necessarily viewed as CLIL. Rather, these findings may be interpreted as indicative of a growing popularity of content-based approaches to ESP teaching, especially the adjunct model of content-based instruction (CBI) which is taught alongside subject courses. This conclusion is supported by the respondents' answers to a question about the type of syllabus used, where the topical or thematic syllabus favored by CBI was chosen by 77% of the teachers, surpassing in popularity both notional (54%) and functional (46%) syllabuses, typically associated with ESP as a specific variety of communicative teaching. The answers to this question also revealed the surprisingly limited popularity of the task-based syllabus, the skills-based syllabus, and the situational syllabus, selected respectively by 30%, 23%, and 7.7% of the respondents, as well as the expected lack of popularity for the structural syllabus, which was used only by 7.7% of the teachers. Of course, the consolidated results for the notional, functional, task-based, skills-based and situational syllabuses are significantly higher than for the thematic syllabus, which shows that communicative teaching continues to be favored over more cognitively-oriented approaches, especially the genre-based syllabus, which was not selected by any respondents. However, the results revealing the respondents' syllabus preferences should be approached carefully, as they may have been distorted by a considerably long and detailed list of options offered, which made the choice considerably difficult.

A final comment about content selection that has to be made is that the growing popularity of content-based teaching is hardly surprising in the knowledge context of an institution of higher education, where gaining as much subject knowledge as possible is often seen as a priority by students. Consequently, an opportunity to increase professional knowledge in addition to linguistic knowledge may be an important reason for choosing an ESP course over an EGP course, as disclosed by a study into the expectations and motivation of students of English for Legal Purposes (ELP) courses at the University of Warsaw conducted by the author (Górską-Poręcka, 2011), where cognitive motivation for enrolment was indicated by 94% of the 78 predominantly pre-experience informants in their second or third year of 5-year long LLM studies, and was slightly stronger than pragmatic or professional motivation, mentioned by 92%.

Moving now to methodology and classroom practices, a 70% majority of the respondents said they used an eclectic teaching method, with 7.7% opting for the communicative method, another 7.7% choosing the task-based method and 15% not being able to specify their answer. These results lend themselves to several plausible interpretations, ranging from the con-

tention that they attest to the growing preference for a pan-methodological or post-method approach, noticed by many authors (e.g. Belcher, 2009), to a negative comment that they indicate a lack of specific pedagogical knowledge, where choosing the eclectic method option could be seen as an avoidance strategy. However, given the professional experience of the respondents, it appears that this methodological eclecticism is the result of an attempt to fuse communicative and cognitive methods into a methodology that would fit the purposes of university students in a low immersion EFL context, described by one of the respondents, an experienced teacher of Business English as ‘whatever works.’ Among other interesting findings were also those concerning the type of language input provided and its relationship to learner output. As the questionnaire disclosed, most teachers put authenticity over comprehensibility, opting for authentic materials prepared by TG members for real communicative purposes rather than teacher-prepared or adapted materials, providing what Krashen (1985) calls ‘comprehensible input’ (i.e. one step above the learners’ current interlanguage). Authenticity was also favored in output generating activities, where all the respondents claimed to use tasks (understood as meaningful and pragmatically valid activities), with half indicating that such tasks took up as much as 50–80% of their teaching time. Finally, the teachers questioned defined contextualization of language use as related to target situations with their typical activities, tasks and texts rather than to the students’ limited current ESP experience, which again indicates a strong preference for practicing language use under conditions that imitate real life and can be re-created in the language classroom only by means of authentic tasks and texts.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it seems that just as English for specific purposes is distinct from English for general purposes, the professional knowledge of the ESP practitioner differs considerably from the cognition of the EGP teacher. The main difference concerns the subject-matter part of pedagogical content knowledge, which in general language teachers contains only language cognitions, collectively known as teacher language awareness or TLA, but in ESP practitioners encompasses also some subject knowledge of the discipline to which the ESP taught is related. Other differences have to do with complex and cognitively demanding roles that ESP teachers have to play and their EGP counterparts do not, which require additional cognitive abilities, for instance, expertise in conducting needs analysis, designing a course, or

developing materials. As distinct from the general language teacher's cognition, the professional cognition of the ESP teacher deserves to be thoroughly explored, both theoretically and empirically. The pilot study presented here constitutes the author's first and very imperfect attempt at exploring ESP teacher cognition in an attempt to validate the proposed conceptualization. Nonetheless, the study yielded many interesting results, which may be summarized as follows:

- Working in a setting characterized by high levels of teacher autonomy and low levels of involvement with other stakeholders, the studied group exhibited considerable readiness to undertake the roles of ESP course designer and teacher, but show less enthusiasm for the roles of needs analyst and course evaluator;
- The respondents generally saw their teacher role as learning facilitators and mediators, which is consistent with communicative teaching, although a sizable percentage assumed the typically university role of knowledge provider;
- As language instructors, the questioned teachers seemed to be set against using one methodology, preferring instead to use multiple methodologies (the eclectic method);
- In their classroom practices the respondents appeared to be greatly concerned with providing authentic rather than comprehensive input, and practicing it by having students perform authentic activities or tasks;
- The language taught in the course tended to be international rather than national English in an attempt to prepare the students for work in an international environment;
- As course designers, the teachers recognized the necessity to teach to delayed, professional needs, as present, educational needs were largely non-existent but they rarely conducted their own target needs analysis, relying instead on the expert knowledge of course book writers;
- To better choose the course input, the respondents assessed their students' present language and learning needs, as well as relevant cognitive and affective variables;
- All members of the group developed their own syllabuses, but while Legal English teachers worked individually, Business English teachers collaborated to produce a standard syllabus;
- The syllabuses designed tended to be communicative, which is consistent with the overall course goal of developing communicative competence but there was considerable interest in content-based instruction and so an increased use of the thematic syllabus;

- The teachers varied considerably in their attitude to the non-linguistic subject content, which for most, served merely to contextualize input, but for some was a legitimate part of the course content;
- A similar diversity was observed in the teachers' choice of course objectives, where teaching domain-specific lexis, teaching functions, and teaching disciplinary concepts were the three most popular options, indicating a desire to teach both communicatively and cognitively.

R E F E R E N C E S

- Andrews, S. (1997). Metalinguistic awareness and teacher explanation. *Language Awareness*, 6 (2/3), 147–61.
- Andrews, S. (2001). The language awareness of the L2 teacher: Its impact upon pedagogical practice. *Language Awareness*, 13 (3), 75–90.
- Andrews, S. (2003). Teacher language awareness and the professional knowledge base of the L2 teacher. *Language awareness*, 12 (2), 81–95.
- Andrews, S. (2007). *Teacher Language Awareness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Belcher, D. (2009). What ESP Is and Can Be: An Introduction. In D. Belcher (Ed.), *English for Specific Purposes in Theory and Practice*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Borg, S. (2003). Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe, and do. *Language Teaching*, 36, 81–109.
- Borg, S. (2006). *Teacher Cognition and Language Education*. London: Continuum.
- Dudley-Evans, T., & St. John, M. (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dweck, C. (2006). *Mindset: The New Psychology for Success*. New York: Random House Publishing.
- Górska-Poręcka, B. (2011). Towards a less dry and more effective Legal English classroom. *The Teacher*, 1 (85), 38–45.
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, R. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A learning-centered approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hales, T. (1997). Exploring data-driven language awareness. *ELT Journal*, 51 (2), 217–23.
- Harvey, L., & Knight, P. (1996). *Transforming Higher Education*. Buckingham: Open University Press and the Society for Research into Higher Education.
- Krashen, S. (1985). *Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications*. New York: Longman.
- Robinson, P. (1991). *ESP today*. London: Prentice Hall.
- Shulman, L. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundation of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57 (1), 1–22.

- Thornbury, S. (1997). *About Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Turner-Bisset, R. (1999). The knowledge bases of the expert teacher. *British Educational Research Journal*, 25 (1), 39–55.
- Van Lier, L. (1995). *Introducing language awareness*. London: Penguin.