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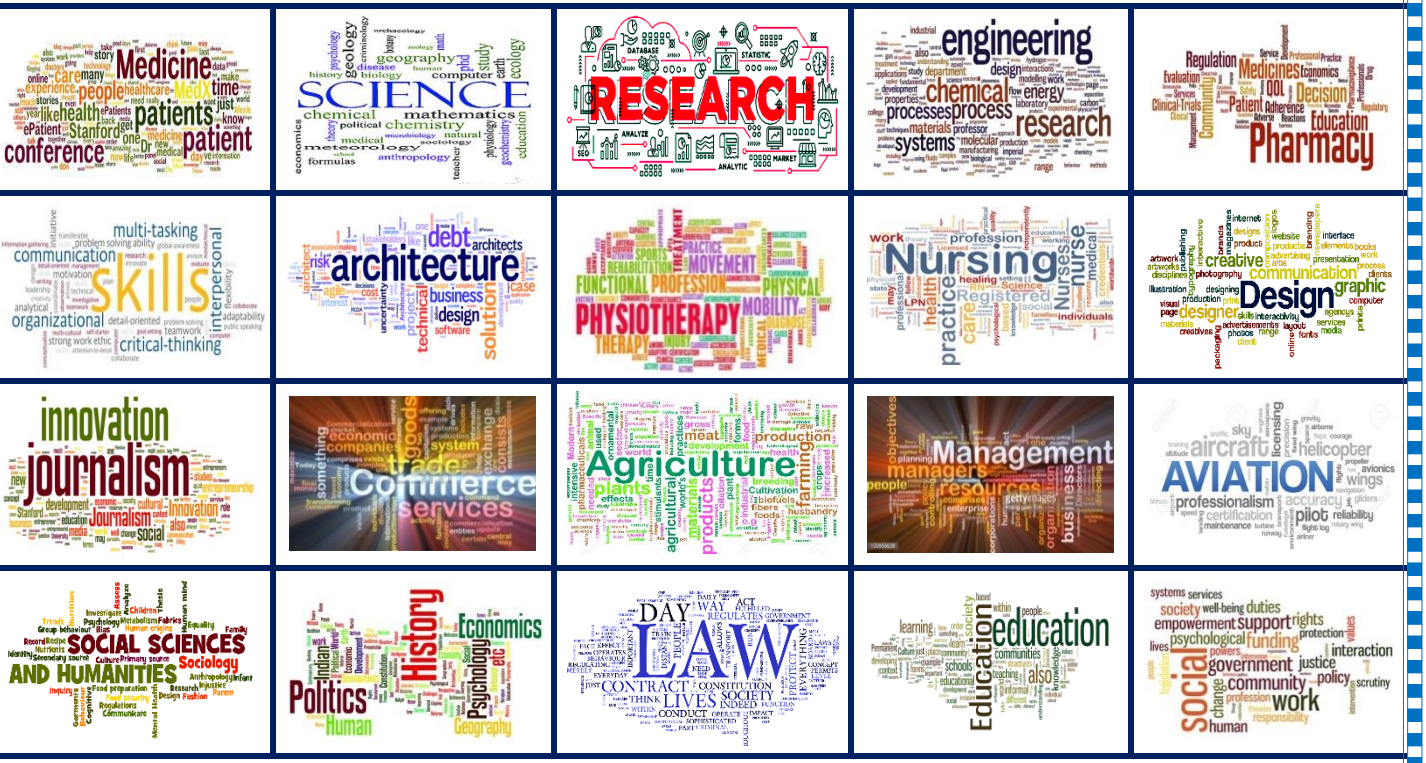

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USING INTEGRATED SKILLS MODEL TO IMPROVE BENINESE ESP ADVANCED LEARNERS' COMMUNICATIVE PERFORMANCE IN TECHNICAL SCHOOLS. CASE STUDY OF SOME TECHNICAL SCHOOLS IN BENIN REPUBLIC

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Abstract: *This paper aims at examining the models of skills integration to foster English for specific purpose advanced learners' communicative performance. To achieve this objective, the study exposes the benefits of the models of skills integration implementation on students' communicative competence during classroom activities. A Mixed method has been used. It consists of two stages. Firstly, the researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data from ten (10) EFL teachers teaching ESP and one hundred (100) learners in industrial sector form four (4) technical schools through questionnaires, classroom observations and interviews. The second stage deals with the experimental process. It has involved forty (40) ESP Learners of the industrial section of Lycée Technique professional of Porto-Novo. The students have been randomly split into two groups of twenty (20): an experimental group which has received the treatment (integrated skill teaching) and a control group which has received no treatment. Both groups have been submitted to a pre-test and a post-test after 6 months. Learners' overall communicative performance scores have been recorded for statistical test using SPSS 25. The results reveal that skill integration has drastically improved ESP learners' communicative performance.*

Keywords*: EFL, ESP, Integration, Skills, Communicative performance.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The goals of foreign language education in technical and vocational education programs is to ensure sustainable language proficiency and advanced professional communicative skills development essential for success in the job market. ESP instruction is designed to meet the needs of those learning English for their specific fields, such as business, science, technology, medicine, leisure, and academic studies. This required that ESP instruction should reflect the authentic language in a professional setting to reduce the mismatch between the skills acquired at school and the skill sets needed at the workplace. (Cunningsworth, 1984: 46) observed that *"In the actual language use, one skill is rarely used in isolation…Numerous communicative situations in real life involve integrating two or more skills…*" This is possible through a model of instruction where the basic language skills (listening, speaking, writing and reading) are integrated and co-developed with learners' cognitive and life skills such as critical thinking creativity and leadership. Unlike the traditional segregated language skills approach which teaches a language skill discretely from the others, this approach presents all language skills side by side with each other so that, besides knowing the language they are learning, the learners are also able to use it in natural communication. (Pardede, 2019). Hinkel (2010) highlighted that the current integrated skills teaching models aim at developing learners' fluency, accuracy, and socio-cultural communicative competence.

Sadly, in the supposedly learners-centred and skills development context of the Competency-Based Approach in Benin, the ESP curriculum development and the specific training needed for the implementation of ESP courses are still deficient. In the absence of adequate training, EFL teachers face several difficulties to design appropriate materials especially when they are newly transferred to technical schools. Thus, most ESP classes result into a frustrating experience for both learners and teachers who focus on English as a mere school subject the success of which is guaranteed by memorizing a certain amount of knowledge and completing mechanical written assignments. Demotivated, ESP learners rely on technical subjects. In the carpentry section of LTCPN for example, express their rejection of ESP saying, "*language studies are not important for technician*" and *"English is not needed for carpentry"*. Another problem is the little time allotted to ESP; two (2) hours per week doesn't help ESP teacher to focus sustainably on skills development. Therefore, most activities are assigned for homework with no other support to Students who simply give up asserting that they are *"not gifted for English."* That is understandable since ESP teachers in the foreign languages environment hardly succeeded in motivating learners to the necessity of English for their professional life. Therefore, ESP learners after years of training can barely communicate when and where they are required to.

This research work does not seek to design a standard ESP curriculum, hardly can it urge the educational authorities to design one at the moment. Rather, the aim of this project is first, to promote integrated language skills development, ESP course that simulates real-life challenges to help students construct practical content knowledge and problem-solving skills while performing situational tasks. Secondly, it investigates the effectiveness of the skill integration ESP (SI-ESP) courses in enhancing students' content knowledge and linguistic fluency using an experimental methodology involving students trained to SI-ESP and formal ESP student. Besides, the project investigated students and teachers' motivation and attitudes toward SI-ESP.

To reach its goals, the current research tries to answers the following questions

1. What are the challenges to the communicative ESP course development in Benin EFL/CBA context?
2. How can SI-ESP model instruction effectively and sustainably improve EFL/ESP students' professional communicative abilities?
3. How can EFL/ ESP teachers efficiently develop skill integrated course despite the lack of formal training?

This paper turns around six sections. The first and the second section deal respectively with the introductory part, and the theoretical keystones that is the report of some researchers who handled the topic. The third section depicted the methodology. It encompasses the target population and the sampling, the research instruments, the data collection procedures and the methods of data analysis. The fourth section is related to the presentation and interpretation of the results, the fifth one is devoted to the discussions and suggestions and the last section is concerned with the conclusion.

2. THEORETICAL KEYSTONES :

2.1 Concept of ESP

English for Specific Purposes addresses the needs of specific learners interested in acquiring some professional communicative skills. Due to its oriented focus, ESP exhibits some characteristics that differentiate it from English for General Purposes (EGP). First, it is a language in a context requiring real-life learning scenarios that should replicate the specific professional settings the ESP students might experience. In comparison with the general English in EFL learning contexts, the ESP students' motivational levels should thus be enhanced by their knowledge of the subject matter, their interest in the field leading to their active participation. ESP "assesses needs and integrates motivation, subject matter and content for the teaching of relevant skills" As Lorenzo (2005). Dudley-Evans & Maggie (1998) define ESP in terms of absolute and variable characteristics.

Absolute traits or features, as the authors claim, include:

- ESP being designed to meet the specific needs of the learners;
- it making use of the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines it serves;
- ESP being centred on the language, skills, discourse and genres that are thought to be relevant to the above-mentioned activities.
- it using a different methodology from that of general English, in specific teaching situations;
- ESP being designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation, without excluding the possibility of being used by learners at secondary school levels;
- ESP being aimed at intermediate or advanced students, the basic knowledge of the language system being important but not compulsory, the course having the possibility to be tailored to beginners, too.

ESP vs EGP

ESP is dynamic and flexible and it reflects it on the entire process of English teaching. Interestingly, nowadays, EGP is influenced by ESP methods and techniques when courses design takes into account learner needs analyses and the use of English in real communication contexts, instead of focusing on traditional grammar or vocabulary related activities (Bracaj, 2014). Thus, while EGP has as an ultimate purpose *education* in general, ESP is mostly centred on *training.* The former is usually in the position of predicting with difficulty the very needs of the learners, whereas the latter is meant to be employed in specific professional contexts (Far 2008). Hutchinson and Waters underline the fact that ESP has to be perceived as an *approach*, and not as a *product*. ESP is not a particular kind of language or methodology, nor does it consist of a particular type of teaching material. Understood properly, it is an approach to language learning, which is based on learner need. (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987)

2.1.1 Current challenges in teaching ESP

2.1.1.1 Course design

One of the greatest challenges of teaching any subject is the course design. Since the ESP students have explicit needs, from the very beginning, the course design, theoretically should not be so complicated. The reality, however, is different.

According to Carver (2002), an ESP course should be based on three elements; first, it has to offer authentic materials, then it requires a purpose-related orientation, which means that a reasonable simulacrum of reality in which practitioners can get involved into communicative tasks that replicate real situations is mandatory and last but not least, it should be defined by self-direction, i.e. learners are to become active users.

To merge all the aspects in the process of course elaboration, the ESP teacher should be ready to answer some questions that framework a successful course design. The inquiries to be made are:

- ✓ **Why** do the students need to learn?
- ✓ **Who** is going to take part in the process (teachers, students, sponsors, experts in the field etc)?
- ✓ **Where** is the learning process going to take place? Does the location provide any potential or impose limitations?
- ✓ **When** is it set to take place? Is there a time limit to be taken into consideration?
- ✓ **What** does the student need to learn? What aspects of the language would be more appropriate under the given circumstances?
- ✓ **How** will the learning be achieved, i.e. what theoretical background will be chosen to fuel the methodology that is meant to be used? (Hutchinson & Waters 1987)

The diagram below (Figure 1) encompasses all the elements that the above-mentioned questions referred to.

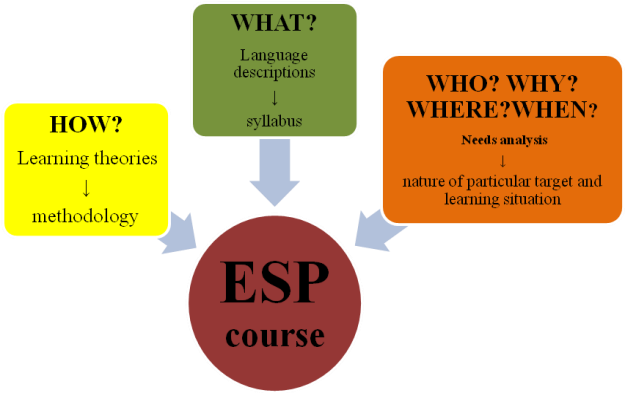

Figure 1. Factors affecting ESP course design (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987)

Noticeably, there are challenges and difficulties related to the ESP teaching process.

In what concerns the syllabus design, teachers have to cope with a great number of ready-made course books which, however, have been designed to ease the teachers' challenge of searching for authentic materials. They offer the possibility to select activities that meet the needs of the learners, but at the same time force them into becoming *'slaves'* of the published textbooks (Anthony,1997), this plethora of resources reducing *'individual instructors'* motivation to construct their '*own'* course content with a focus on learners' context and particular needs (Brunton, 2009). This implies that ESP practitioners should use textbooks as an alternative option. The advised procedure is that teachers collect *"empirical needs-assessment data"* to create and adapt materials to meet the specific needs identified Belcher (2004:165), these materials being selected to be able to equip the students to deal with authentic examples of specialist discourse (Phillips & Shettlesworth 1978):

ESP material design

Four main elements should be taken into account when teachers have to design their *'own'* materials: the input, content focus, language focus and the task (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). The diagram below (Figure 2) emphasizes how they influence one another and framework the various aspects of the language to be taught.

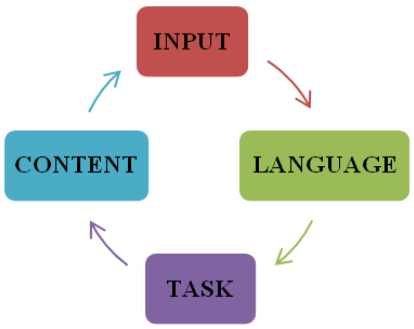

Figure 2. A materials design model (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987)

The input may refer to texts, dialogues, problem-solving task, simulations, audio or/and video recording, etc. The content presents the information, the subject matter that both teacher and students are dealing with; language is the one that enables the transmission of the information and has to be appropriate for the students level of knowledge and expertise in handling a foreign language, while the task should be designed in such a way to offer the possibility of putting into practice the content meant to be transmitted.

2.2 Integrated Skills

Integrated skills are the teaching approach that incorporates the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) to develop students' communicative competence and their ability to use English to gain access to social, vocational, educational, or professional opportunities. This approach was based on the philosophical view that using a single language skill is very rare in everyday life because daily communication requires people to use the four language skills together. Researchers, scholars, psychologists, and educators since the 1980s to come to the consensus about the necessity of teaching the four language skills in an integrative model in language teaching.

Unlike the integrated skill approach, the segregated language skills approach dominated language teaching up to the end of the 1970s due to the predomination of the traditional language teaching methods, such as Grammar Translation Method (GTM), Audio-Lingual Method, Structuralism Approach, Direct Method, Total Physical Response, and Natural Approach. Under the domination of GTM, for instance, a foreign language learning was focused on grammatical rules analysis and literary texts translation from the target language to the learners' native language. Structuralism Approach views language as a complex system of interrelated parts. Under this approach, EFL teaching was directed to assist the learners to master the language elements and learn the rules to see how these elements were combined. Consequently, the learners knew the target language elements and rules but could not use them to communicate. The actual Benin EFL teaching still reflects this teaching approach despite the advent and the implementation of the Competency-Based Approach, as if these teaching practices are deeply anchored in teacher habits.

At the end of the 1970s, the segregated skills approach was challenged by the advent of communicative language teaching (CLT). Widdowson (1978), the first advocate of language skills integration, designated that language uses do not take place in discrete "units" but in the form of discourse and in specific social contexts. Kurniasih (2011:73) accentuated *"In reality, each language process enhances students' ability to use the others"*. Thus, to use the target language competently, learners should develop both receptive and productive skills in both spoken and written discourse and this could be effectively done by learning the four language skills interactively. Hersan (1988:22) posited that "*to enable the learners to use English to communicate, English language skills "should be taught in integration in order to arrive at ease in communication*"

2.3 Two forms of Integrated-Skill Instruction

In the integrated skills approach, the learning of skill leads to the learning of one or more other skill (Brown, 2001). Various studies have recently been conducted on integrated skills approach implementation in EFL contexts. The studies focusing on integrated skills presentation effectiveness (Hefferman, 2006; Borhany, Tahriri, & Tous, 2015) revealed that if it is managed well, integrated skills teaching is effective to improve students' language skills and pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Studies focusing on learners' and teachers' attitudes (Richard-Amato, 1996; Zuniga, 2016) showed that the integrated skills approach supports not only learners but also the teachers. To facilitate the integrated skills approach, teachers can employ two instruction methods: content-based instruction (CBI) and task-based language teaching (TBLT). To create more variations, combining these two methods is also possible.

In CBI, students practise language skills while engaging with activities focusing on a specific subject, such as education, culture, literature, or science. By so doing, the students practise all the language skills in a highly integrated, communicative manner while they are studying the contents of the subject at hand. In CBI, a topic or a theme of the subject matter is used as a basic building block to unify language skills. Thus, language skills are interwoven around the common topic/theme being studied (Brown, 2001).

In TBLT, students engage with the target language communicative tasks, i.e. activities requiring comprehending, producing, manipulating, or interacting in authentic language while attention is principally oriented to meaning rather than form (Nunan, 1989). To develop their language skills, students are assigned to work in pairs or groups to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. This paper focusses on the task-based approach to skill integration and discusses its applicability.

2.4 Task-Based Instruction

In task-based instruction, students participate in communicative tasks in English. Tasks are defined as activities that can stand alone as fundamental units and that require comprehending, producing, manipulating, or interacting in authentic language while attention is principally paid to meaning rather than form (Nunan, 1989).

The task-based model is beginning to influence the measurement of learning strategies, not just the teaching of EFL. In task-based instruction, basic pair work and group work are often used to increase student interaction and collaboration. For instance, students work together to write, develop a television commercial, enact scenes from a play, or take part in other joint tasks. More structured cooperative learning formats can also be used in task-based instruction. Task-based instruction is relevant to all levels of language proficiency, but the nature of the task varies from one level to the other. Tasks become increasingly complex at higher proficiency levels.

For instance, in carpentry beginners might be asked to introduce each other and name tools, machinery complete listen - repeat tasks. More, advanced students, instead of working listening and repeat routine could be asked to introduce a model of furniture and give details of its manufacturing process from the conception, the design, and the choice of the type of wood to the final products. They could also write a user manual for some modular design furniture they have already produced etc. This leads to a concrete and useful language skills development discretely integrating the four basic skills in addition to critical thinking. Performed in teams, such activities develop collaborative work, leadership and effective communicative skills. Further assignments can be given for the marketing stage the technical support of their products etc., developing thereby, and cross-curricular skills.

EPS teachers should seek for originality, creativity and smart use of their teaching environment. For example, Some ESP course could take place in factories and workshops where working materials and equipment are already available. Learner, then, experience the language in authentic environments in a true learner-centred and skill development-based process whit a discrete skills integration motivating and relevant to both teachers and learners. English, therefore, is no more an in-class academical subject but a valuable communication tool. Clearly, there are several advantages to such a smart implementation of skill integration model that is flexible and does not require a changing of the whole curriculum. Rather, it is a reorganisation, a redesigning of teaching processes every teacher can achieve.

2.5 Advantages of the Integrated-Skill Approach

The integrated-skill approach exposes English language learners to authentic language and challenges them to interact naturally in the language. Learners rapidly gain a true picture of the richness and complexity of the English language as employed for communication. Moreover, this approach stresses that English is not just an object of academic interest nor merely a key to passing an examination; instead, English becomes a real means of interaction and sharing among people. This approach allows teachers to track students' progress in multiple skills at the same time. Integrating language skills also promotes the learning of real content, not just the dissection of language forms. Finally, the integrated-skill approach, whether found in content-based or task-based language instruction or some hybrid form, can be highly motivating to students of all ages and backgrounds.

Integrating the Language Skills

To integrate language skills in EFL instruction, teachers should consider taking these steps:

- Learn more about the various ways to integrate language skills in the classroom (e.g., content-based, task-based, or a combination).
- Reflect on their current approach and evaluate the extent to which the skills are integrated.
- Choose instructional materials, textbooks, and technologies that promote the integration of listening, reading, speaking, and writing, as well as the associated skills of syntax, vocabulary, and so on.
- Even if a given course is labelled according to just one skill, remember that it is possible to integrate the other language skills through appropriate tasks.
- Teach language learning strategies and emphasize that a given strategy can often enhance performance in multiple skills.

3. METHOD :

This paper research has been carried out using a mix method type of research in 2 stages involving data collected from both qualitative and qualitative sources. An Experimental approach to research designed has been adopted to assess the efficiency and the effectiveness of the ESP Skill integration instruction model on carpentry learners' performance. Throughout this section, the target population, the sampling, the instruments, the data collection procedures and the method of analysis are developed.

3.1 Target Population and Sampling stage 1

The sampling included ten (10) ESP teachers and one hundred (100) advanced ESP learners (premiere and terminal) randomly selected in the main technical schools in Benin republic. A total of four (04) schools were taken into account where questionnaires have been dispatched to collect information.

Table 1: Sampling

Schools	Number of teachers	Number of learners
LTP PN	03	25
LTC	02	25
LTI Pobe	02	25
LT Coulibaly	03	25
TOTAL	10	100

3.2 Research Instruments

The research instruments consist of questionnaires, classroom observations and experimentation.

3.2.1The experimentation

3.2.1.1 Target Population and Sampling Stage Two

Table 2: Sampling

Schools	Number of teachers	Number of learners
LTP PN	01	40
TOTAL	01	40

3.2.1.2 The procedure

The experiment consists in applying an ESP integrated skills teaching-learning process in 2 states for six months to an experimental group and comparing their overall oral communication skills improvement to a control group. For this purpose, advanced carpentry ESP students of one upper fifth class of 40 students in Lycée Technique Professional of Porto-Novo in Oueme region have been selected. The class was randomly split into two groups of 20 students resulting in an experimental group (EG) which received the experiment and a control group (CG) which received no treatment.

The teacher in the class has been trained to design ESP integrated Skills procedure and activities to the students of the experimental group. The activities include oral presentations, report of manufacturing processes and investigations, creative role-play simulating real-life professional situations, Problem-solving activities etc. the teaching process is learner-centred and integrated CBA teaching strategies such as group work, pair work, individual work and collective work. School authorities have been involved in research so that Most EG courses take place in workshops and factories when they were available.

3.2.1.3 The Assessment Grids

The selected Carpentry ESP learners' oral proficiency have been assessed during a pre-test at the beginning and a post-test at the end of the experimentation using a simplified grid summarized in table (table 2). Their overall score ranged from 5 to 20.

Table 3: Oral proficiency assessment grid

Items	1	2	3	4	5
Fluency					
accuracy					
Content (field knowledge)					
Communicative effectiveness					

1-Poor; 2-fair; 3-good; 4-very good; 5-excellent.
Source: Own compilation

3.2.2 Questionnaires

3.2.2.1 Questionnaires for Teachers and Learners

Questionnaires are addressed both to EFL teachers and learners.

- ten (6) questions to teachers about the use of the ESP integrated Skills approach to improving students' speaking fluency and accuracy
- three (3) questions to learners about their contact with the English language in use, their difficulties and needs

3.2.3 Classroom Observation

Classroom observations are reliable because they enable the researcher to eyewitness what is going on in classes. Then, this instrument aims at assessing teachers challenges in their daily practices and crosscheck information provided through questionnaires. Also, it evaluates the communicative aspect of the language in a classroom situation.

3.2.4 Procedures of Data Collection and Methods of Data Analysis

Data were collected from EFL teachers and learners.

One hundred (100) questionnaires have been addressed to learners and filled on spot during English classes with the help of the teachers in the classroom after a brief introduction of the researcher, its research and outcome. EFL teachers were met at their weekly pedagogical workshop and the same strategy were used. This enables the researcher to collect 100 % of the questionnaires. Data obtained from the target population were analysed and processed using computing and statistical software mainly IBM SPSS 25 and Microsoft Excel 2019. The results were presented in tables, figures (charts).

4. RESULTS

Findings are displayed according to the questions of the questionnaire addressed to teachers and learners.

4.1Teachers' highest Academic and Professional Qualifications

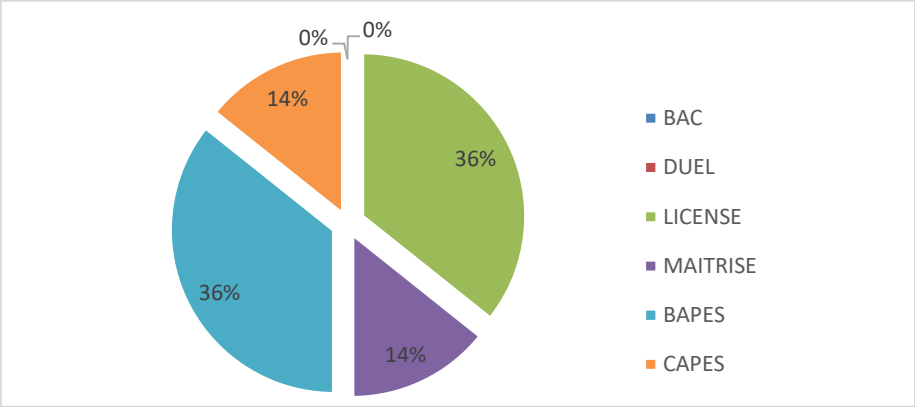

Fig 1: Teachers' Academic and Professional Qualifications

The results in figure 1 show that none of the considered teachers has been exerting with BAC or DUEL while thirty-six percent (36%) have been doing the job with Licence and BAPES; fourteen percent (14%) with MAITRISE and CAPES. This means few teachers are qualified to do the job.

4.2 ESP integrated Skills activities in EFL classes

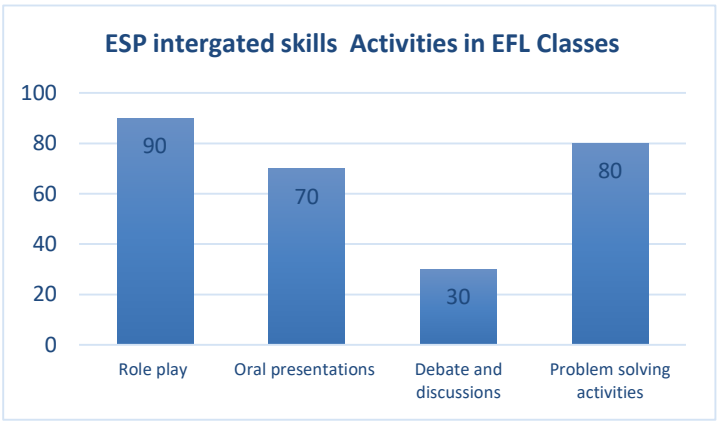

Fig 2: ESP integrated Skills activities in EFL classes

Figure 2 shows that the majority of EFL teachers have identified role play (90%) problem-solving activities (80%), oral presentations (70%), to be effective ESP integrated Skills activities that can be implemented in EFL classes. However, unpredictably their overlook debate and discussion activities which account for only thirty percent of the chosen sample.

4.3 Advantages to the implementation of ESP integrated Skills teaching

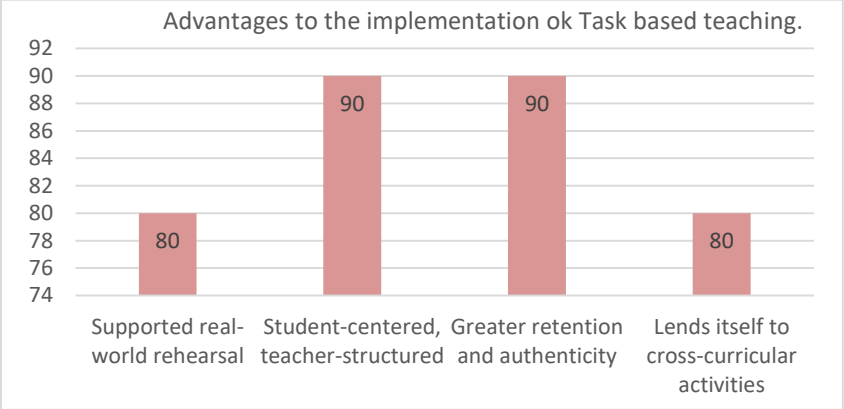

Figure 3: Advantages to the implementation of ESP integrated Skills teaching

Figure 3 evidence that the respondent teachers almost unanimously that is to say ninety percent (90%) recognize that the ESP integrated Skills instruction model is a student-centred and teacher-structured approach that generates greater retention and authenticity this leads to real-world rehearsal (80%) and lend itself to cross-curricular activities (80%).

4.4 Students' Exposure to authentic Language

Table 4: Students' Exposure to authentic the English Language during Speaking Activities

Exposure to authentic language	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 30% of the granted time	80	80
More than 30% of the granted time	20	20
Total	100	100

From table 3, eighty percent (80%) of the students are exposed for less than thirty percent (30%) of their class time to authentic material and language; only twenty percent (20%) of the students declared they are exposed to authentic communicative situation.

4.5 Teachers' Perception of Students' language Proficiency (Fluency and Accuracy)

Table 5: Teachers thoughts about their Students' Fluency and Accuracy

Fluency and Accuracy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low level	08	80
Acceptable level	02	20
Total	10	100

From table 4 more than eighty-percent (80%) of the respondents say their students have a low level in speaking; twenty percent (20%) of the respondents say their students have an acceptable level but are fluent and not accurate at all and only few of them are fluent and accurate.

4.6 Difficulties related to ESP integrated Skills teaching

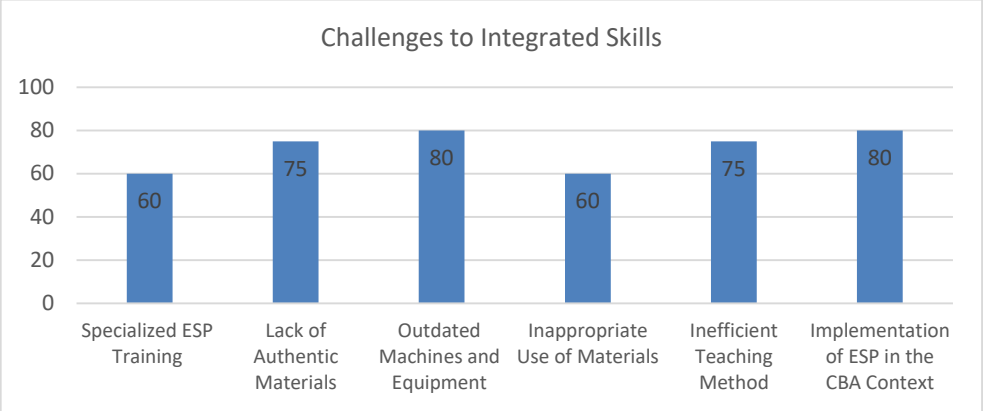

Figure 4: Challenges related to integrated ESP teaching

Figure 4 reveals that the challenges of the efficient implementation of integrated skill are related to the outdated materials/equipment and the mediocre implementation of the ESP in the CBA context account for 80% each. The lack of authentic materials and the inefficient teaching method equally score 77 % and the impediment related to the specialised training and the inappropriate use of the teaching materials are both denounced by 60 % of the sampled teachers.

4.7 ESP Learners' Challenges

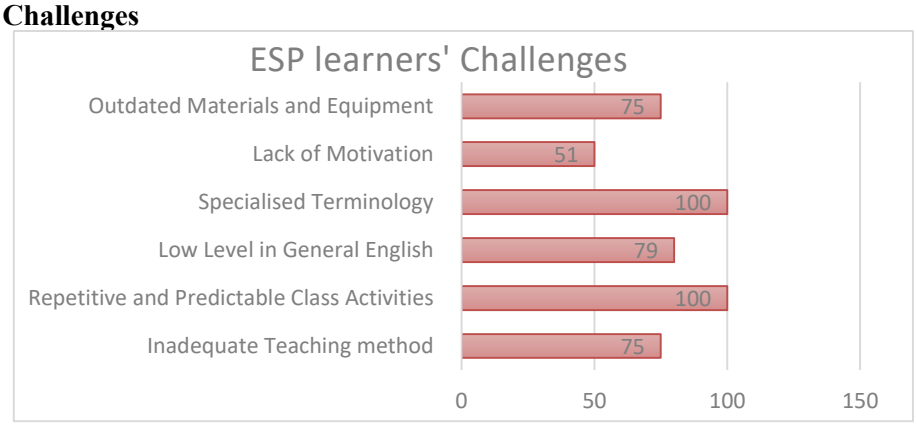

Figure 5: ESP Learners' Challenges

Figure 5 discloses that unanimously, (100%) ESP students claim that the main obstacles are specialised terminologies and repetitive class activities. The hurdles related to the outdated materials and the inappropriate teaching method are also equally shared by 75% of the respondents. Other challenges, namely the low level in general English and the lack of motivations have respectively scored 79% and 51 %.

4.8 Traditional Classroom activities

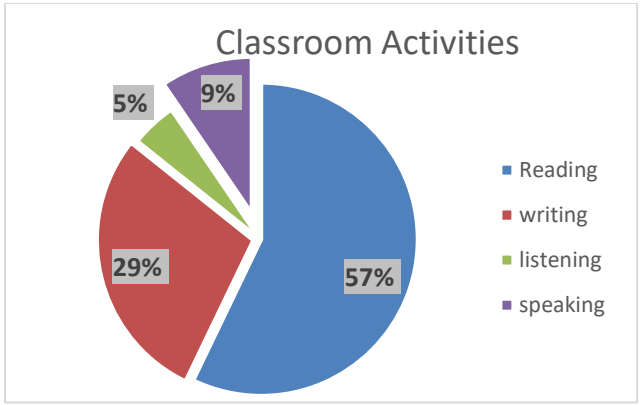

Figure 6: Traditional Classroom activities

Figure 6 reveals that ESP class activities are essentially limited to the basic and mechanical segregated four skills-based teachings with reading and writing the main activities scoring respectively 57%. Unsurprisingly, the neglected language skills in ESP classes are speaking (9%) and listening (5%).

4.9 The Experimentation Report (the effect of ESP integrated Skills teaching on students' performance)
Here two groups have been taking into account: Experimental group where IS strategies are implemented and Control Group where IS strategies are not taken into account. This analysis is based on the students' scores representing their average overall oral communication performance. The data are analysed using SPSS 25 with the following conditions:

1. Null hypothesis H_o and a hypothesis H_1 are formulated for the pre-test and post-test:
   - $H_{01:}$ There is no statically significant difference between the EG and the CG oral performance (pre-test)
   - H_{02}: There is no statistical significance between the effect of ESP integrated Skill teaching and learners' oral performance. (Post-test)
   - H_1: There is a statistical significance between the effect of ESP integrated Skills teaching and learners' oral performance. (Post-test)
2. Statistical significance (Sig) is established for a p-value noted $\alpha<0.05$
   The **level** of statistical **significance** is expressed as a **p-value** between 0 and 1. A ***p*-value** less than 0.05 (typically ≤ 0.05) is statistically **significant**. It indicates strong evidence against the null hypothesis, as there is less than a 5% probability.
3. If H_{02} is rejected, then H_1 is proved.
4. **The practical significance** (the real-life significance) expresses the strength of the correlation between our variables is assessed through the *Effect size* expressed in ETA squared value

The objective is to reject this null hypothesis using the analysis of variance ANOVA test for statistical significance. Two values are expected **p-value** $\alpha < 0.05$ indicating statistical significance and the ETA squared value expressing the Measure of Association assessing the effect size between the independent variable (the treatment) and the dependent variable (learner performance/score). The ETA square helps to measure the impact of ESP integrated Skills teaching within our sample.

4.9.1 Pre-test report

Table 6 **Pre-test report**

Report			
Overall Score			
Group	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Experimental	9.00	25	1.354
Control	8.96	25	1.485
Total	8.98	50	1.407

The report of the pre-test on the carpentry ESP learners shows that both the experimental group and the control group perform identically with Mean $_{(\text{Experimental Group})} \approx$ Mean $_{(\text{Control Group})}$ ($9.00 \approx 8.96$). The standard deviation values are also approximatively equal. It can be concluded that there is no statistically significant difference between groups

Table 7 **Pre-test ANOVA Table**

ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Overall Score * Group	Between Groups	(Combined)	.020	1	.020	.010	.921
	Within Groups		96.960	48	2.020		
	Total		96.980	49			

In table 6 the analysis of variance ANOVA shows that there is a statistical significance between both groups as *Sig =.921* or p-value noted p= .921 > α=0.05 (the significance level). This value allows confirming the **Null Hypothesis H_{01}** asserting '*no differences exist between the Experimental and the control groups in terms of speaking performance'.*

4.9.2 Post-test Report

Tables 8 **Post-test report**

Post-test Report			
Overall Score			
Group	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Experimental	12.48	25	1.759

Control	9.12	25	1.509
Total	10.80	50	2.347

The experimentation post-test report shows the experimental group considerably outperforms (mean=12.48) the control group (mean=9.12) for a total of mean =10.80 for both groups. The total standard deviation of both groups is 2.347 for the 50 participants.

Table 9: Post-test one-way ANOVA control group*experimental group

Post-test ANOVA Table							
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Overall Score * Group	Between Groups	(Combined)	141.120	1	141.120	52.559	.000
	Within Groups		128.880	48	2.685		
	Total		270.000	49			

In table 6 the analysis of variance ANOVA shows that there is a statistical significance between both groups as *Sig =.000* or p-value noted $p=3.0483^{-9} < \alpha=0.05$ (the significance level).This value allows rejecting the Null Hypothesis asserting that no differences (related to ESP integrated Skills instruction treatment) exist between groups. The practical level of correlation/association between treatment and groups is assessed by the measure of association summarized in table 9

Table 10: Measure of association of Overall Score * Group

Post-test Measures of Association		
	Eta	Eta Squared
Overall Score * Group	.723	.523

The measure of association in Table 9 reveals in the current case, the Eta squared value expressing the Effect size is ES= .523 This indicates a strong correlation between the dependent variable and the independent variable. This practically means that 52.3 % of the variability of learners Performance is explained by the ESP integrated Skills teaching model. These data are interesting as they confirm the predicted positive impact of teaching strategies and learners' languages skills development.

4.10 Interviews Report

The interview revealed the following information: firstly, teachers have very few information about the models of skills integration. According to them, the major challenge they encounter is due to low communicative competence of ESP learners. This is because students do not participate in class. Most of the interviewed teachers define the integration of the skills language as the linking of the four skills of language learning: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Secondly, most of the interviewed teachers know that the integration of four skills language is very important to students' communicative performance. They also mention that the problem of fostering students' communicative performance is related to the lack of adequate training to ESP teaching in general and more specifically to an outdated teaching approach practice inherited from a restrictive implementation of the CBA. This implementation has evolved into a content-based curriculum with a priority given to school year theoretical programme completion rather than learners language skill development. Patently, the professional context of technical schools and learners' communicative needs are almost ignored which leaves little chance to communicative language development.

4.11 Classroom Observations Report

It has been noted that all the investigated teachers are EFL teachers transferred to Technical schools without an ESP specific training. The classroom observations revealed that some students can write correctly a sentence but they are unable to use correctly the same sentence in a conversation. The paradox is that most students with good marks in English are unable to communicate. This confirms the fact that ESP is taught as a simple academical subject the success in which is guaranteed by getting good mark completing mechanical assignments. They are exposed to no other language interaction than the instruction-focused teacher talk. Unconsciously they restricted English experience to instruction and they score in quizzes and examinations, which leads to the demotivation that can be felt during English classes.

The second part of the observation deals with the teachers teaching method. Even though all the investigated teachers seem to have well prepared their classes, they fail to create a communicative environment. The teaching experience is a skill-segregated, yet content-based focused with priority given to reading and writing (note-taking and

completing testing and evaluation tasks). The teaching strategies include individual, pair, group, and collective work mechanically applied. The teaching materials when they are available are either outdated and/or not smartly used. Skill integration instruction is still a challenge in most classes due to the teachers' inabilities to design activities that leads to the discrete development of multiple skills. These can be attributed to the lack of appropriate training. Data gathered from classrooms observations corroborate the data collected from the questionnaires and interviews.

5. DISCUSSION:

Most of Beninese ESP learners do not enjoy the English class and are not motivated. Since English is taught in a foreign language context, in absence of real communication need, the language teaching has gradually been restricted to a mere school subject in a so-called "competency-based approach", the ineffective implementation of which has led to content and/or objective-based instruction model where success is guaranteed by memorising and completing written tasks. Brown and Yule (1983:3) confirm that "*for most of its history; language teaching has been concerned with the teaching of written language".* The results collected through classroom observations confirm that learners' rejection of English is related to the current teaching-learning model. A segregated skill content-based teaching approach is highly demotivating for ESP learners who simply give up on real language skills development and attend classes for grade and pass examinations. The interviewed teachers, predictably confess that the major challenge they encounter is due to the dichotomy of students having good or even excellent marks but unable to speak English.

According to Jing (2006 quoted in Hungyo and Kijai, 2009), the importance of using skill integration lies on the fact that, when facing a real communicative situation, more than one skill is used to communicate and integrated skill approach provides opportunities to develop these skills at the same time. ESP learners needs urge teachers to adapt and provide them with authentic language development environment reflecting professional life exigencies. Teaching in ESP context should focus on what learner can do with the language. Courses, then, are to be designed to fit this purpose any other attempt is useless. Barbuzza et al (2008) mention that in recent decades the experts have realised that by emphasizing what learners can do with the language, rather than using the forms of language, EFL instructors can incorporate any or all of the language skills that are relevant into the classroom area.

There are evident barriers to a communicative ESP teaching in Benin as the respondents pointed out, such as the teaching syllabus, the inappropriate materials and most importantly the training. ESP teachers confess the inefficiency of the current system and plead for adequate training. The keystone of any sustainable improvement of teaching practice is a continuing and effective training to a true skill integration in EFL/ESP teaching-learning process. Regrettably, in Benin, ESP is taught by EFL teachers who have been transferred to technical schools without the required specific ESP training since there is no official ESP course in the country's teacher training colleges. The technical school training college provides a curriculum which allows being trained only in technical subjects. The problem related to this practice is the fact that ESP and EFL outcomes are quite different. Richards (2001:28) contends "*In contrast to students learning English for general purposes for whom mastery of the language for its own sake or in order to pass a general examination is the primary goal, the ESP student is usually studying English in order to carry out a particular role*." This is why ESP courses are plain replications of EFL teaching-learning process with technically oriented content organised around reading (57%), writing (29%) but rarely speaking (9%) and seldom listening activities (5%). In such condition, how can EFL teachers be expected with a training deficiency to effectively implement ESP skill integration for an effective communicative skill development achievement?

Patently, ESP teaching-learning process outcomes stand little chance for an efficient and effective achievement. ESP/ EFL teachers in the current situation can only bank on their abilities to readapt to the exigencies of a communicative language model rather than waiting for educational stakeholders' effective support. This is possible through an appropriate self-training to a model of instruction that is flexible and requires merely a reorientation of teaching process and outcomes, with the possibility for teachers to design cost-efficient and relevant materials. Patently, an ESP integrated Skills instruction model as confirmed by the most EFL/ESP teachers is real-word need-oriented, motivating and cross-curricular skills development focussed. Also, it has the advantage to fit the Competency-Based Approach implemented in Benin because is learner-centred. ESP integrated skills teaching in besides providing authentic learning experiences leads to learners' autonomy as the most task requires both in-class and out-of-classroom settings activities. Moreover, it helps learners to capitalise and reinvest learning strategies they have previously developed. In other words, learners '*learn how to learn*' and share it by collaborating with their classmates.

The results of the experiment establish that Skill Integration ESP consistently improves teaching experience and learners' communicative performance. Hungyo & Kijai (2009) argue that the "*activities used by teachers in the integrated approach are real-life activities and situations and thus create an interactive learning environment."* In other words, when using the Integrated-Skill Approach, teachers feed their students with communicative situations that have to as real as possible so that students realize the importance of learning the foreign language. The current research

advocates also for task-based integrated skills teaching because it matches the context of the CBA implementation in Benin. In Task-Based Instruction, individual work, pair work and group work can significantly increase student interaction and collaboration, communication and critical thinking. For instance, students work together to write and edit a procedure, develop a user manual, enact scenes from a play, or take part in other joint tasks simulating professional life. More structured cooperative learning formats can also be used in task-based instruction. Task-based instruction is relevant to all levels of professional and technical language proficiency.

This model of instruction in EFL/ESP can:

- ✓ Help learners carry over their skills and declarative knowledge from one skill to another which facilitates and simplifies the improvement of the other skills.
- ✓ Create a dynamic and exciting classroom environment
- ✓ Enable learners to have more realistic access to authentic language learning.
- ✓ Lead to focus on realistic language and can, therefore, lead to the students' all-round development of communicative competence in English
- ✓ be enthusiastically accepted by students and most of them had a positive attitude toward this approach
- ✓ Lead to a better comprehension of materials by students

Having taken the advantages of the integrated skills approach into account, the researchers believe that this approach can alleviate the problem of communicative incompetence among EFL learners.

6. CONCLUSION:

The communicative approach has become mainstream in language teaching. This research has used an experimental methodology to collect relevant information gathering data form both quantitative and qualitative sources. The answers provided by the respondents in addition to the data collected from the experimentation, classroom observations and conversations confirm that the majority of teachers encounter challenges to teach communicatively due to hindrances and the most important of which is the lack of appropriate training. Obviously, the implementation of current teaching approach gives no real chance to an efficient ESP teaching-learning experience. This paper evidences that integrated skills models, well implemented, develop the learners' communicative performance. It creates interaction for a more communicative class that greatly improves the students' interest in language for a self-directed learning experience placing learned at the core of their development.

The current research advocates for a practical, flexible and dynamic implementation of the Competency-based approach in Benin taking advantages from relevant and innovative teaching-learning techniques and strategies. This should be priorities for educational stakeholders. But, before it becomes a reality, EFL teachers should invest in their personal and professional development grabbing every opportunity to be trained using the available technologies of communication and online courses. They should also explore possibilities to build sustainable teachers associations and networks using social media to share knowledge and materials with national and international experts. This shift is needed for a real learner-centred approach the CBA adopted in Benin is expected to be.

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