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FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND VIETNAMESE

DESIGNING AN ESP READING SYLLABUS FOR THIRD-YEAR STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF BUSINESS IN BOOKS AND CULTURAL PRODUCTS AT HA NOI UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE**NGUYEN THI QUYNH HOA***

ABSTRACT: This study aims to develop an ESP reading syllabus for third-year students specializing in Business in books and cultural products at Hanoi University of Culture (HUC). It seeks to identify students' learning needs, to determine the appropriate syllabus to achieve the course objectives and propose a new ESP reading syllabus specializing in business in books and cultural products tailored for effective teaching and learning at HUC. In analyzing perspectives from graduates, they offer valuable reflections on how well a proper ESP reading syllabus prepare them for real-world applications, while third-year students highlight current learning challenges and expectations. To be specific, they prefer hands-on, discussion-based, and real-world reading exercises over purely text-based activities. Lecturers, on the other hand, contribute their expertise in tailoring content to meet professional requirements. Together, these perspectives help refine and enhance the syllabus to better equip students for future career success

KEY WORDS: ESP reading syllabus; business in books & cultural products; ESP reading design; business English; need analysis.

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1. Rationale of the study

The Vietnamese government's open-door policy has blown a new wind into Vietnamese economy, fostering its integration with the world's market. As a result, numerous international companies have entered and invested in Vietnam in various fields such as business, tourism, publishing or technological information. Given this, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has become an effective tool to satisfy learners' needs for future careers, research or academic success.

The development of ESP syllabus at Hanoi University of Culture is still in its infancy. In fact, the faculty of Business in Books and Cultural Products in the university has not developed a proper ESP syllabus. Five teachers, who are in charge of teaching ESP for this faculty, including the researcher, have to find materials for teaching, which has caused a lot of obstacles for the implementation of ESP teaching and learning. The inconsistency in language use, grammatical structures and the difficulty of materials varies from one class to another, leading to unequal outcomes among students. Additionally, the randomly selected materials do not effectively meet the students' needs and university's training objectives. Clearly, the lack of a proper ESP reading syllabus has caused many difficulties for both lecturers and learners, leading to challenges in achieving course objectives. Hence, developing a well-structured ESP reading syllabus plays an important role in teaching and learning, especially for those who have desire to increase their English professional knowledge and the ability to read logically and scientifically. For the above reasons, the researcher has chosen the topic "**Designing an ESP Reading Syllabus for Students of Faculty of Business in Books and Cultural Products at Hanoi University of Culture.**" This decision comes from practical concerns related to the researcher's work as an ESP lecturer for students specializing in Business in Books and Cultural Products at HUC. It is hoped that the proposed syllabus will provide both practical and theoretical values, helping students improve their ability to work with ESP materials while also meeting social trends.

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2. Aim of the study

This study is aimed at: (i) identifying the students' target needs and learning needs; (ii) finding out what kind of syllabus meets the objective of the course; (iii) proposing a new ESP reading syllabus appropriate for teaching and studying ESP at Hanoi University of Culture (HUC).

3. Content

3.1. Definitions and characteristics of ESP.

Experts and researchers have defined English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in various ways, basing on their fundamental perspectives or their approach to the different elements that characterize ESP. English for Specific Purposes is designed to meet learners' specific needs, with its content shaped by learning objectives. It is linked to particular fields and follows discipline-specific methods (Hutchinson & Waters, 1993). Unlike General English, ESP prepares learners for specialized roles by focusing on distinctive language features. Dudley-Evans & St John's (1998) definition is the most comprehensive, integrating key characteristics from other scholars. They claim that, the characteristics of ESP are given as follows: ESP is tailored to learners' needs, using methodologies and activities relevant to specific disciplines. It focuses on language, skills, discourse, and genres appropriate to these activities. It may be connected to particular fields and adopt different teaching approaches than general English, and is mainly for adults in academic or professional settings, though it can be adapted for secondary students and beginners. In short, the ESP definitions mentioned above share one common idea: the learners' needs which play a very important role in designing an ESP course. However, the definition proposed by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) is considered the most influential. Therefore, it will be adopted as the working definition for this study.

3.2. English for Business Purpose/ Business English

Business English (BE) is a subdivision of ESP, thus it shares the common elements of ESP. However, BE is dissimilar to other varieties of ESP in that it is often a mix of specific content related to a particular job area and the general content aimed at improving overall communication skills. In terms of language, business communication is primarily based on practical language structures and vocabulary. Ellis and Johnson (1994, p.3) emphasize the need for syllabus designers to be selective when addressing the needs of BE learners. In general, BE encompasses diverse content and focuses on the importance of the meaning as well as the expression. Regarding business reading texts, Mackenzie (2001, p.4) believes that "an informative reading text provides an overview of a particular topic, introduces key business and economic concepts, and incorporates a substantial amount of relevant technical vocabulary, along with a variety of comprehension exercises, vocabulary activities, and discussions." This suggests that syllabus designers should ensure that texts have clear objectives and that exercises prioritize reinforcing and applying the knowledge related to the given topic. From the perspective of grammatical structures, Bowen (1997, p.3) claims that the essential grammar of BE not only consists of concepts like the present perfect and modal verbs but also covers functions such as giving advice, expressing agreement, and negotiating. In short, BE focuses not only on profession-specific terminology but also on practical communication skills. Mastering Business English makes professionals more competitive in the global job market

3.3. The purpose of Needs Analysis

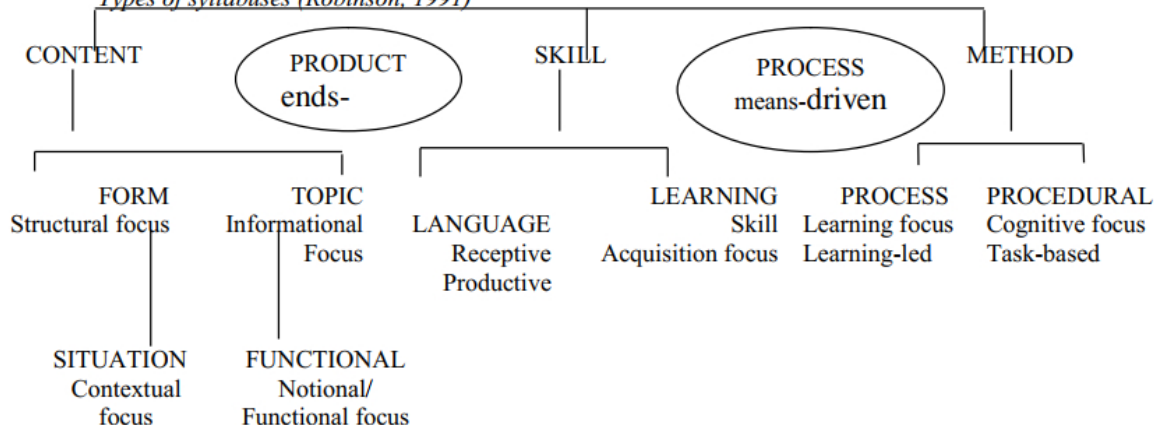
Needs analysis-a set of procedures used to collect information about learning needs of a particular group or groups of learners. It is the initial basis to plan any language course, especially ESP courses. In Brown's view (1995, p.35) "Need analysis refers to the activities involved in gathering information that will serve as the basis for the development of a curriculum that will meet the learning needs of a particular group of students". Richards (2001) outlines its purposes, including assessing required language skills for specific roles, evaluating course effectiveness, identifying necessary changes, addressing skill gaps, and understanding learners' difficulties. In the case of the present study, the author chooses some of the points mentioned above, but not all of them. In this

particular research, the first purpose of “finding out what language skills a learner needs” is clearly determined at the beginning of the research, that is the reading skill. In addition, the author is also interested in other purposes such as, gathering information about students’ backgrounds, the difficulties that the learners encounter in reading; identifying specific tasks that business people have to deal with in their actual work, and finding out the appropriate content that needs to be included in the proposed ESP reading syllabus. In short, through needs analysis, we are able to determine the learner’s needs as a starting point for developing an ESP syllabus. By identifying what students need, syllabus designers can create effective and meaningful language courses that lead to real-life success and up-to-date content.

3.4. Definition of syllabus and type of ESP syllabi

To define the syllabus, some authors advocate the narrow view which distinguishes between syllabus design and methodology, while some others give a broader view which argues that with the advent of communicative language teaching, the distinction between content and tasks is difficult to sustain. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define a syllabus as a document outlining what should be learned, highlighting its specific content. In contrast to narrow views, Yalden (1984) see the syllabus as both a content framework and a methodological tool that integrates learning needs, language, and social processes. Clearly, the choice of syllabus plays an essential role in meeting learners’ professional and academic needs. Below is an overview of these syllabus types.

Types of syllabuses (Robinson, 1991)



As revealed in the diagram, Content, Skill, and Method are the three main bases of syllabus design. Their advantages and shortcomings will be examined to develop an effective reading syllabus for the third year students specializing in Business in Books and Cultural Products. Regarding to *the content-based syllabus*, it includes the language form (Grammatical syllabus) which focuses on teaching correct language structures for accuracy but is considered for not promoting communicative competence (Wilkins, 1983; Nunan, 1988). However, this method remains popular, because it provides a commonly recognized set of structures which can be used as one criteria for syllabus organization. The Functional/Notional syllabus prioritizes communication needs, addressing "what learners need to express" rather than grammar. It offers real-world language use, motivation, and flexibility but lacks clear grading criteria (Wilkins, 1983). The last type is the situational syllabus which links language learning to social settings, while the topic-based syllabus (Robinson, 1991) aligns with learners’ academic fields in ESP. The skills-based syllabus develops core language skills with adaptable strategies (Hutchinson & Waters, 1993). Meanwhile, the method-based syllabus emphasizes learning processes, with task-based approaches structured by cognitive difficulty but posing challenges in context and learner stress (Nunan, 1988 & Robinson, 1991). In brief, the

syllabus is defined in different ways, from the narrow to the broad perspectives. The key challenge for designers is to choose the right approach for their learners. Considering the advantages and shortcomings discussed, this study adopts a mixed content-based and skills-based syllabus to balance theoretical knowledge and practical application. In other words, by integrating both aspects, the syllabus can be tailored to learners' needs, making it effective for various contexts and real-world language use.

3.5. Reading: Purposes and Essential Skills

Reading is a means of communication, with its primary goal as comprehension—deriving meaning from written text. According to William (1984), reading helps learners reinforce language encountered through listening and speaking, reuse it in writing, and extract relevant information. Rivers and Temperley (1978, p. 187) outline common reading purposes: obtaining information, following instructions, maintaining communication, staying updated on events, and entertainment. Karlin (1987) highlights five key reading skill areas: (i) word recognition skills (context clues, phonics, dictionary use), (ii) word meaning skills (multiple meanings, figurative language); (iii) comprehension skills (literal and inferred meaning, critical evaluation); (iv) study skills (locating/selecting information, using graphics), and (v) appreciation skills (recognizing literary language and forms). Munby (1978) and other experts emphasize essential reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, deducing meaning, summarizing, and using reference tools. Nuttall (1996) divides reading skills into word-attack (guessing meaning, using morphology, ignoring difficult words) and text-attack (syntax, discourse markers, inference). Clearly, effective reading not only improves comprehension but also boosts critical thinking, widens vocabulary and reinforces communication skills. In other words, one of the teacher's main functions when training students to read is to make them see the way they read in order to get the message conveyed by the writers precisely and rapidly or to develop students' reading skills through various activities to meet specific information needs.

4. Methodology

4.1. Data collection instruments

The research employs a combination of the two main data collection instruments: questionnaires and an interview. This multi-method approach is to give a clearer insight into different levels of analysis and shows that the outcome of one method can help to develop or inform others. The questionnaires are designed with both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The open questions allow for detailed responses, while closed questions offer answer choices. The first type of questionnaire is for graduates working at four State Corporations for Export and Import of Books and Cultural Products. It collects data on personal background, English usage, reading purposes, job-related ESP challenges, and suggestions for course improvement at Hanoi University of Culture. The second type of questionnaire aims at 115 non-major third-year students in the faculty of Business in Books and Cultural Products. It includes five questions related to their English proficiency, attitudes toward ESP course, language level and difficulties, expectations of ESP reading and favored types of reading exercises. These students have finished two years of studying General English and are studying ESP. Additionally, data from 30 alumni is collected. These graduates have had about two years of work experience and have maintained ties through Alumni system across the university. A part from the questionnaires, the study also conducts a semi-structured interview with five teachers (ages 35–53) from English division, specializing in Business English at Hanoi University of Culture. The interview is made up of four questions, eliciting the participants' views about the significance of an ESP reading course, the types of material that the lecturers often ask students to read, the appropriate topics to be put in the syllabus and relevant reading skills and interactive techniques included in the proposed syllabus. The study is carried out by following a series of planned stages: Thirty copies of the first questionnaire are distributed to a group of 30 ex-students working in the

related field, while copies of the second questionnaire are delivered to 115 third-year students in the faculty of Business in Books and Cultural Products at HUC; (ii) The semi-structured interviews with five teachers from the English division at HUC could not be conducted at the same time due to their different lecture schedules. Therefore, the author has to coordinate with each teacher to arrange a suitable interview time.

5. Findings and analysis

Results collected from the graduates: Six questions are carefully studied and analyzed for the graduates who have completed an experimental ESP course at HUC.

Question 1: This question intends to discover the frequency of their English usage at work.

No	Frequency of usage	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Often	18	60%
2	Sometimes	8	26.67%
3	Rarely	3	10%
4	Never	1	3.33%

As can be seen from the above table, the majority of respondents (60%) often use English at work, suggesting that English plays an important role in their professional environment. To be specific, they have to deal with translation, E-commerce & Online Sales, international publishing, Business Communication, importing and exporting procedures in which opportunities to get in contact with foreign partners are available. Meanwhile, 26.67% sometimes employ English, which signals that while English is essential, it may not be required for every task or role. Only 10% rarely use English and 3.33% never use English in their jobs. They explained that opportunities to access English are limited due to being newly-established companies, or because the companies only deal with the domestic market. Generally speaking, the results reflect that English serves as a primary communication tool for most employees, though its importance differs depending on specific roles or divisions.

Question 2: This question aims to determine how often graduates participate in ESP reading in their current work

No	Frequency of ESP reading	No of Respondents	Percentage(%)
1	Often	20	66.67%
2	Sometimes	7	23.33%
3	Rarely	2	6.67%
4	Never	1	3.33%

It can be inferred from the above mentioned information that most of the ex-students often engage in ESP reading materials, implying that the respondents understand the importance of English at work. They often read specialized English materials related to the publishing and business such as reports on marketing & sales strategies for publishing, reports on distribution & retail strategies, copyright & intellectual property law documents, contracts, letters, and faxes. Additionally, 23.33% sometimes read ESP materials, indicating that while English is useful, its necessity may depend on certain tasks or situations. A smaller portion of respondents rarely (6.67%) or never (3.33%) participate in ESP reading, suggesting that for some individuals, it is either not a regular requirement or not their interest. Overall, the findings prove that ESP reading is of great importance for the majority of graduated students of business at HUC.

Question 3: This question is concerned with graduates' difficulties in dealing with an ESP course while they were at university, particularly in reading and comprehension.

No	Difficulties	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Specific vocabulary	8	26.67%

2	Difficulties with reading sub-skill and strategies	9	30%
3	Summarizing a paragraph or text after reading	11	36.67%
4	Grammatical structures	2	6.67%

The results indicate that summarizing a paragraph or text after reading poses the greatest challenge for ex-students, with 36.67%. This indicates that many learners find it difficult to extract key details after reading, emphasizing the need to enhance their ability to identify main ideas, distinguish key points from supporting details, and paraphrase information. Meanwhile, 30% of participants report difficulties with reading sub-skills and strategies, implying that some students have difficulty with comprehension techniques such as making inferences, summarizing, and identifying main ideas. Specific vocabulary is another significant difficulty, affecting 26.67% of respondents. This suggests that a lack of vocabulary knowledge slows down comprehension, reinforcing the importance of expanding students' word banks through targeted exercises and contextual learning. Finally, only 6.67% face issues with grammatical structures, suggesting that grammar plays a relatively smaller role in reading difficulties compared to vocabulary and information gathering.

Question 4: This question is designed to explore the different types of English reading texts encountered in their work (One person who never uses English is left out).

No	Text types	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Emails, memos, content for promotion and branding	23	79.31%
2	Reports of specialist subject	3	10.34%
3	Business contracts	2	6.90%
4	ESP magazines, newspaper articles	1	3.45%

As can be seen from the table, emails, memos and content for promotion and branding (79.31%) are the most frequently encountered type of English reading texts in the ex-students' work. This indicates that daily communication and marketing-related content play a crucial role in their tasks. While reports on specialist subjects account for 10.34%, indicating that some employees are required to read technical documents, business contracts are read by 6.90% of respondents. Only 3.45% of respondents read ESP magazines and newspaper articles. This may suggest that professional publications with research-based content is not a primary focus for most respondents, or that such documents are assigned by specific roles within their workplaces.

Question 5: The question contains responses that refer to the graduates' opinions on the current ESP reading course in business in books and cultural products at HUC.

No	Opinions	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Limited types of exercises using specialist vocabulary	11	36.67%
2	Poor exploitation of topics and themes	9	30.00%
3	Inadequate professional depth of some reading materials	7	23.33%
4	Unsystematic reading texts	3	10.00%

The data reveals that the limited types of exercises using specialist vocabulary (36.67%) emerge as the most significant issue, indicating that respondents feel there are not enough activities to develop students' language skills. This may influence students' ability to maintain and apply business-related terminology effectively. Poor exploitation of topics and themes (30.00%) is another

major concern, suggesting that the topics are not fully explored or integrated into real-world business scenarios. Inadequate professional depth of some reading materials accounted for 23.33%, while 10.00% of respondents found the reading texts illogical.

Question 6: This question is aimed at collecting information on the suggestion for the need to design an appropriate syllabus.

No	Suggestion	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Providing more engaging exercises featuring specialist vocabulary	11	36.67%
2	The Vietnamese translation and vice versa activity	4	13.33%
3	Enhancing the systematic organization of content	6	20%
4	Knowledge and terminology of specification must be included more	9	30%

Based on the survey results, the most significant requirement suggested by the graduates is to provide more engaging exercises featuring specialist vocabulary (36.67%). This approach would ensure that students develop their subject-specific language skills as well as their ability to apply knowledge in real-world contexts. The findings also indicate that there is not enough knowledge and terminology of specification in the experiment course (30%). Therefore, more of them should be added. Meanwhile, enhancing the systematic organization of content is 20%, The Vietnamese translation and vice versa activity receives 13.33%, implying that the specialized texts should be sometimes translated into Vietnamese and vice versa so that students can understand them more clearly.

Results collected from the third-year students

Question 1: This question deals with students' English level when starting ESP course in business in books and cultural products.

No	English level	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Advanced	4	3.48%
2	Upper-intermediate	8	6.96%
3	Intermediate	55	47.82%
4	Pre intermediate	40	34.78%
5	Elementary	8	6.96%

The investigation reveals that after 2 years of learning GE, using the same book, students are still at different level in their proficiency. The reason for this is that some of them have a certain amount of English before entering the university, whereas others - especially those who are ethnic groups know very little English. That is why, the gap between them remains during the time of learning GE. When designing ESP syllabuses, the author should adopt a progressive approach by gradually increasing the complexity of texts and a wide range of exercises. This ensures that students build a solid foundation before dealing with more advanced content.

Question 2: The second question is about the third-year students' attitudes toward a proper ESP course in business in books and cultural products.

No	Necessary	Very Necessary	Not necessary	No response
Number of students	78	31	6	0
Percentage (%)	67.83%	26.96%	5.22%	0.00%

The students' reactions to this question show that the majority (67.83%) of students consider a proper ESP reading course in business necessary because it provides good preparation for them to become confident with future assigned tasks. While a portion (26.96%) find it very necessary, only a

small fraction (5.22%) believe it is not. Overall, the findings indicate that a well-designed ESP reading course in business is relevant and clearly valued by respondents, as it equips them with essential specialized knowledge in English and language skills for professional contexts.

Question 3: This question focuses on third-year students' opinions regarding the language level of the current ESP learning materials in business in books and cultural products

No	Language Level & Difficulty	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	The technical terms are appropriate for your level	60	52.17%
2	The technical terms and phrases are easy for your level	2	1.74%
3	The technical terms and phrases are somewhat difficult to understand but still manageable	45	39.13%
4	The technical terms and phrases are too advanced and beyond your current proficiency level	8	6.96%

The data indicates that the majority of third-year students (52.17%) find the technical terms and phrases in the ESP learning materials appropriate for their level. However, a portion (39.13%) finds the terms somewhat difficult but still manageable, suggesting that while students can cope with the content, some level of challenge remains. Only 1.74% of students believe the learning materials are easy, which implies that very few students feel the technical terms are too simple. On the other hand, 6.96% of respondents find the materials too advanced and beyond their proficiency level, which may indicate a need for additional support or simplified explanations for some learners.

Question 4: This question is designed to explore the students' expectation of the ESP reading course.

No	Expectation	1 st priority		2 nd priority		3 rd priority	
1	To consolidate basic grammar	9	7.83%	21	18.26 %	85	73.91%
2	To build up business terms	106	92.17%	9	7.83%	0	0%
3	To read and comprehend concepts of business	104	90.43%	11	9.57%	0	0%
4	To write and translate emails, content for promotion and branding, contracts, reports from English into Vietnamese & vi versa.	112	97.39%	3	2.61%	0	0%

The investigation reveals that students have a clear preference for focusing on practical language skills rather than consolidating basic grammar in their ESP reading course. The majority (97.39%) prioritize the ability to write and translate emails, content for promotion and branding, contracts, reports from English into Vietnamese & vi versa, highlighting the importance of real-world application in their learning. Similarly, building up business terms (92.17%) and reading and comprehending business concepts (90.43%) are also ranked as top priorities, suggesting that students are keen on developing a strong foundation in business-related language. On the other hand, consolidating basic grammar is largely considered a lower priority, with 73.91%. This reflects that students may already have a sufficient knowledge of grammar and are looking for more specialized knowledge. Overall, the findings suggest that the ESP reading course should emphasize business terminology, comprehension, and translation skills to meet student needs effectively.

Question 5: The question tries to find out types of reading exercises/activities that students like to do so as to improve the students' reading sub skills and language use.

No	Types of exercises	No of students	Percentage (%)
1	Identifying the topic of the text	78	67.82%
2	Summarizing the text or choosing the best summary for the text	96	83.48%
4	Reading comprehension questions	88	76.52%
5	Finding the key words	101	87.83%
8	English- Vietnamese Translation & vice versa	105	91.30%
6	Jigsaw Reading (Group Work – Skimming & Discussion)	109	94.78%
7	Gap-filling	70	60.87%
8	True-False-Not given information questions	83	72.17%
9	Role-Play (Real-Life Reading & Speaking Practice)	113	98.26%
10	Crosswords	55	47.83%

The data shows a strong preference for interactive and communicative reading exercises over traditional methods. Role-Play (98.26%) is the most favored, highlighting the importance of real-life application and active engagement. Similarly, Translation (94.78%) and Jigsaw Reading (91.30%) are well-received, emphasizing the benefits of collaborative and bilingual learning. Moderately popular exercises, such as Summarizing (83.48%) and Finding Key Words (87.83%), assist students to acquire essential information quickly, while True-False-Not Given (72.17%) promotes critical reading. However, traditional comprehension questions (76.52%) fall behind, indicating a preference for more dynamic activities. Gap-filling (60.87%) and Crosswords (47.83%) are less favored because it can be challenging and demanding. Students may have to struggle with vocabulary recall and grammar accuracy. Clearly, a balanced mix of comprehension and real-world application will ensure a more effective ESP learning experience.

Results from semi-structured interview with the ESP lecturers

Question 1: The question explores the lecturers' responses to the importance of having a proper ESP reading course in business in books and cultural products. The 100% of interviewees indicates that a proper ESP course is indispensable in the university's curriculum because a well-structured ESP course provides a clear learning path, ensuring students to acquire knowledge systematically rather than through patchy handouts.

Question 2: It involves types of materials that the lecturers often ask their students to read. Nearly all the interviewees' responses are to read materials on business communication (memos, emails, reports), marketing and branding, finance and legal (financial statements, agreements). They also ask their students to read samples of contracts so that they could compile them on their own when necessary.

Question 3: The question aims at exploring the appropriate topics to be put in the syllabus for the third - year students. The following topics proposed by the lecturers: (i) An overview of Business (ii) Legal forms of business; (iii) Marketing research; (iv) Advertising and Branding; (v) Sales and Distribution; (vi) School and Library Promotion and Sales; (vii) Book fairs. A part from the required topics, the topics for further reading are also suggested: (i) E-commerce and Digital Marketing in Publishing; (ii) Copyright and Intellectual Property in Publishing; (iii) Consumer Behavior in the Cultural Product Market; (iv) Retail Strategies for Bookstores and Online Marketplaces. It is widely recognized that, the inclusion of the required topics and topics for further reading suggested by lecturers is highly relevant. These topics provide specialized knowledge suitable for major training and societal needs, helping students understand targeted marketing, distribution channels, and promotional strategies specializing in books and cultural products.

Question 4: The question explores reading-sub skills and interactive techniques for teaching reading.

The results reveal that different reading-sub skills and interactive techniques mentioned by the lecturers nearly coincide with each other, indicating their shared perspective on effective teaching strategies. The suggested reading-sub skills are skimming (obtain the gist of the text); scanning (to locate specifically required information); critical thinking (develops analytical thinking and evaluation of texts); inference (to enhance comprehension by reading between the lines); reading for further discussion and evaluation. The suggested interactive techniques are digital storytelling (students create short video or multimedia summaries of what they read); role-playing (students act as business professionals, publishers, marketers, retailers, wholesalers, sales managers and respond to reading-based scenarios); simulated business meetings (students present and analyze business trend or publishing marketing for a particular audience); jigsaw reading (students are involved in speaking and summarizing the reading passage). Clearly, using sub-reading skills and interactive methods enhance students' engagement and practical application of reading skills. Real-world applications help students connect reading materials to industry-specific situations, making learning more relevant. Overall, reading-sub skills and interactive techniques can promote active participation, deeper understanding, and real-world skill development in ESP reading courses.

6. The proposed ESP reading syllabus for the students specializing in Business in Books and Cultural Products at HUC

After reviewing the background theories for designing an ESP reading syllabus and analyzing the results of the students' needs analysis, along with data collected from graduates and ESP lecturers, we will present the selected syllabus type with its rationale. The course objectives will then be established, followed by the syllabus topics, sub-reading skills, exercises, activities and the assessment methods. The selected syllabus tailored to third-year students specializing in Business in Books and Cultural Products at HUC will combine content-based and skills-based approaches. These approaches ensure exposure to the target language by focusing on both linguistic structures and subject-specific content, helping students enhance language form and meaning. Through engagement with a variety of topics, students naturally acquire language skills in context. Additionally, they can develop key sub-skills that assist them in reading and comprehend specialist texts effectively. Clearly, the advantages of the two above mentioned syllabi forms a suitable syllabus that aligns with the ESP teaching and learning objectives for Business in Books and Cultural Products at Hanoi University of Culture.

Aims and Objectives of the course: The aims of the ESP reading course for the third year students specializing in Business in Books and Cultural Products are included as follows: By the end of the course the students are able to read, comprehend and analyze a wide variety of basic business texts as well as to discuss, translate and write contracts, memos, emails. The objectives of the course: (i) develop ability to read and comprehend various business-related texts (reports, correspondence, contracts, cultural product description, description of sales & distribution strategy) (ii) Use reading skills/strategies (skimming, scanning, intensive) (iii) engage in discussion related to business-related text (iv) write contracts, emails, reports (v) translate key business texts into Vietnamese and vi versa.

Topics in the syllabus: Based on the information collected from the ESP lecturers the following topics should be included in the proposed syllabus: (i) An overview of Business (ii) Legal forms of business; (iii) Marketing research (iv) Advertising (v) Sales and Distribution (vi) School and Library Promotion and Sales (vii) Book fairs. These topics should be arranged in a logical sequence according to their business relevance so that students can acquire the knowledge logically and effectively. For example, an overview of business should be put first because if one can not understand about business, he/ she does not know where to start the business and how to run it effectively. Coming next is the topic of Market Research. The objective of market research is to examine the possible

demand for a product before it is put on the market. In other words, market research is the initial and important step to decide the success of the product.

Reading sub-skills and interactive techniques: The reading skills and interactive techniques recommended by the lecturers should be incorporated into the syllabus. However, types of sub-skills which receive high percentages of effectiveness will be practised more in the syllabus, as a motivative factor in students' learning such as skimming to get general content of the text; scanning to locate specifically required information; critical reading to develop analytical thinking and evaluation of texts. Additionally, the different interactive techniques such as digital storytelling (students create short video or multimedia summaries of what they read); role-playing (students act as business professionals, publishers, marketers, retailers, wholesalers, sales managers and respond to reading-based scenarios); simulated business meetings (students present and analyze business trend or publishing marketing for a particular audience); jigsaw reading are also on priority to be included in the syllabus. In short, by integrating the highly effective sub-skills and interactive techniques, the syllabus enhances both engagement and comprehension. These methods not only make learning more dynamic but also equip students with essential analytical and practical skills, which prepare students for both academic and professional success."

Exercises/Activities: Based on types of reading exercises/activities collected from students' preferences. All the reading exercises/activities proposed by the lecturers should be incorporated into the syllabus: identifying the topic of the text, summarizing the text or choosing the best summary for the text, reading comprehension questions, finding the key words (helps in understanding how key terms relate to the overall meaning of the text), English- Vietnamese translation & vice versa (enhances students' ability to transfer meaning between languages accurately), gap-filling, true-false-not given information questions, role-play (real-life reading & speaking practice), crosswords. Clearly, each type of reading exercise/activity serves its own purpose in helping learners develop essential skills for understanding specialized texts in their field. Here's a detailed explanation of their roles:

Assessment: There are two types of assessment: (i) the learning assessment, which involves monitoring students' performance not only during the learning process but also at strategic points (mid-term test, presentation and the final exam). The outcomes of these assessments will make teachers and learners recognize whether and how much language instruction is needed. Regarding the content of a reading ESP test, Robinson (1991) states that a key issue in designing the test is to determine how closely the test content should align with students' specialized fields of study. Obviously, when designing an appropriate ESP reading test in terms of content, the test designer must pay attention to students' specialist background knowledge, language proficiency and the content of the actual texts students have to cope with during the course; (ii) the course evaluation: According to Richards (2001), course evaluation plays an important role in syllabus design. He outlines questions to evaluate whether the course is achieving its aims, how it is implemented, who is affected by the curriculum (e.g. teachers, administrators, students), the effectiveness of those involved in teaching a language course, and how it compares to similar courses. In order to answer the above questions, the main source of information comes from the interviewees (lecturers) and students through class observation, the test results, and questionnaires at the end of the course. Overall, a well-structured evaluation process can contribute to syllabus enhancement, ensuring that the course continues to meet learners' specialized demands effectively.

6. Conclusion

This study is carried out with the aim of designing a proper ESP reading syllabus for the third-year students specializing in Business in Books and Cultural Products Department at HUC. An in-depth study is conducted to gather information on current students' learning needs, to examine the difficulties faced by graduates while they were learning ESP reading course, and identify shortcomings in the handouts that were delivered to them during their studies. Additionally, interviews are conducted to collect suggestions from ESP lecturers for an appropriate ESP reading syllabus in books and cultural products. The findings from this study have led to the proposal of a new ESP reading syllabus aimed at enhancing the teaching and learning of ESP (business English) at Hanoi University of Culture. The notable results show that 36.67% of respondents face difficulty in summarizing a paragraph or text after reading, while 30% struggle with reading sub-skills and strategies. Additionally, 26.67% have difficulty in comprehending specialized vocabulary. This indicates a need for targeted instruction in these areas. The most commonly encountered text types in professional settings, as reported by the chosen graduates, include emails, memos, content for promotion and branding (79.31%), followed by reports of specialist subject and business contracts, with 10.34% and 6.90% respectively. This indicates that ESP reading course should focus on practical business communication skills. With respect to opinions on the current business English reading materials at HUC, 36.67% of graduates outline a limited variety of exercises using specialist vocabulary. Meanwhile, 30% find the topics and themes poorly exploited and 23.33% of respondents reveal the inadequate professional depth of some reading materials. Additionally, 36.67% of respondents suggest incorporating a wide range of exercises, while 30% highlight the importance of adding more knowledge and terminology relevant to their fields. For current ESP third-year students, the most significant finding is their emphasis on practical applications. About 97.39% prioritize writing and translating emails, content for promotion and branding, contracts and reports from English into Vietnamese and vice versa, while 92.17% seek to build business terminology and 90.43% enjoy reading and comprehend concepts of business. In addition, students demonstrate preferences for specific reading exercises to foster comprehension and language use. Among these exercises, role-playing exercises (98.26%), and jigsaw reading (91.3%) are particularly favored. These insights show that an interactive, situational approach would improve students' engagement and learning outcomes. Regarding the respondents as the lecturers, the key topics as well as the reading-sub skills that the lecturers recommend for the inclusion in the syllabus emphasize strongly on career-oriented topics related to business in books and cultural products and analytical reading techniques. Moreover, interactive methods such as digital storytelling (students create short video or multimedia summaries of what they read); role-playing (students act as business professionals, publishers, marketers, retailers, wholesalers, sales managers and respond to reading-based scenarios); simulated business meetings (students present and analyze business trend or publishing marketing for a particular audience); jigsaw reading (students are involved in speaking and summarizing the reading are also in priority. Based on the major findings of the needs analysis, aims and objectives of the course are set up, and a content-based and skill-based syllabus is proposed. Finally, learning assessment and course evaluation is highlighted to facilitate course designers to have better decisions on how to improve elements in the process of course design. It is hoped that the proposed syllabus will achieve both practical and theoretical value, helping students improve their ability to engage with ESP materials effectively.

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**Thiết kế giáo trình tiếng Anh đọc hiểu dành cho sinh viên năm thứ ba chuyên ngành
Kinh doanh xuất bản phẩm tại Trường Đại học Văn hóa Hà Nội**

Tóm tắt: Nghiên cứu nhằm phát triển giáo trình đọc hiểu tiếng Anh chuyên ngành kinh doanh xuất bản phẩm dành cho sinh viên năm thứ ba tại Trường Đại học Văn hóa Hà Nội. Mục tiêu của nghiên cứu là phân tích nhu cầu học của sinh viên, xác định giáo trình phù hợp để đạt được mục tiêu của khóa học, đồng thời đề xuất việc thiết kế một giáo trình đọc hiểu tiếng Anh chuyên ngành kinh doanh xuất bản phẩm nhằm nâng cao hiệu quả giảng dạy và học tập tại HUC. Trong quá trình phân tích góc nhìn từ cựu sinh viên, họ cho rằng một giáo trình đọc hiểu tiếng Anh chuyên ngành cần trang bị cho sinh viên các ứng dụng thực tế. Trong khi đó, sinh viên năm ba nhấn mạnh vào các khó khăn gặp phải khi học tiếng Anh chuyên ngành và đưa ra các kì vọng về khóa học. Cụ thể, họ ưu tiên các bài tập đọc mang tính thực hành, thảo luận và gắn với tình huống thực tế hơn là các hoạt động chỉ dựa vào các bài đọc. Mặt khác, các giảng viên đưa ra các góp ý về chuyên môn trong việc điều chỉnh nội dung bài đọc để phù hợp với yêu cầu nghề nghiệp. Sự kết hợp giữa các góc nhìn này giúp hoàn thiện và nâng cao chất lượng của giáo trình, trang bị tốt hơn cho sinh viên trong nghề nghiệp tương lai của họ.

Từ khóa: Giáo trình đọc hiểu tiếng Anh chuyên ngành; thiết kế giáo trình đọc hiểu tiếng Anh chuyên ngành; Kinh doanh xuất bản phẩm; tiếng Anh kinh doanh; phân tích nhu cầu.