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INTEGRATING FUNCTIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE IN ENGINEERING CURRICULUM: A CASE OF BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of English-medium instruction by non-native speaking lecturers to non-native speaking students is one of the most challenging processes in engineering education. This article aims with a view to analyzing the need of introducing Functional English Language course to the engineering curriculum in the context of Islamic University of Technology, Bangladesh. It also elaborates the use and importance of English course in IUT. This paper proposed a complete course outline (syllabus) that can be covered in first two semesters. More emphasis could be given on Language Skill and Fundamentals of Grammar in the first semester whereas Research competence could be kept in prime concern in the second semester so as to prepare students for facing the next challenges like project paper writing, presenting paper in seminars or conferences etc. Some guidelines also provided to the curriculum planners, teachers and coordinators to run the course in an effective and efficient manner. Further research is required to identify the problems of implementing Functional English Course in Engineering curriculum as a whole and also finding ways to come up with solution to those problems.

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1. INTRODUCTION

One major problem for us today as teachers of IUT is how to design programs for students of science and technology in OIC member states using English as a second language. An important key to this problem lies in arriving an acceptable definition of functional English for the people concerned, for it is only after this has been settled that the efforts invested in the teaching and use

of English language can yield appreciable results. Many educated people rate as poor the English performance of IUT students at all levels of our education system. These people are not alone in their observation. But he who says that the standard of English has fallen says the standard of education has fallen.

Again, it is the responsibility to the authority of IUT to teach English language and general studies as a means of bridging humanistic and technological disciplines into a continuing and meaningful dialogue. Without this dialogue, we believe, IUT, itself will disintegrate further into a technological institution, emerging, as it were, from the ivory only to retreat into a Tower of Babel. The freshman is admitted into the IUT on the basis of his performance in secondary higher secondary school certificate examination. The freshman is used here to refer to a student in his first year in the university. But a pass in English language paper adds an extra weight to the school certificate result of the freshman. Many students these days do manage to get admission into IUT because they have got good grades in mathematics, sciences and English language in the secondary school level studies, which is quite a good achievement but for me I feel that, these grades should be considered only for admission purposes and more English courses should be taught to these students after gaining admission in IUT. We in IUT feel that this achievement in the English language is sufficient to study technology education without studying any other course of English language. We in the department of engineering and technology do not see any reason why a good candidate in sciences should take extra English language courses as part of his engineering program. Unfortunately, the language skills required for engineering and technology are not those being tested by the School Certificate English language examination. One thing has emerged from all these: the lectures are dissatisfied with the low standard of English of the freshmen who make grades in School Certificate Examination but are handicapped in their studies in IUT by their inability to read with understanding or write with clarity.

It is the purpose of this paper to review some of what we know about the importance in the teaching of Functional English for engineering and technology, to survey the present position, and to indicate promising direction. It will seek to define Functional English and its importance for the study of engineering and technology. It explains the importance of the 'semester paper' in the teaching of Functional English as well as its philosophical rationale. It shows the rightful place of writing in engineering and technology education.

Functional English for engineering and technology, which may be called *Use of English*, can be defined as a communicative tool in engineering and technology education; it involves thinking and cultural processes which allows technological education to be acquired in a society or in situation that uses English as a medium of instruction (Eyidile, 2008). Eyidile has observed too that vocational and technological education is not only one which emphasizes direct application of practical knowledge but equally a process of enabling cultural transmission and cultural and social change to take place harmoniously. This is because there are habits and techniques which are supposed by attitudes, and models of feeling. If Western technology is the outcome of the functioning of that society, then our acquisition of technology will depend on the functioning of our

own kind of society. If we accept these two definitions of Functional English and engineering and technology education, we will agree that English language must be seen and taught as an effective facilitator in the acquisition of engineering and technological in IUT. Ultimately, the importance of English language as the language of wider communication in IUT is linked with political, social, economic, and educational factors. There is, therefore, the expressed need these days to produce more effective users of English among the students of IUT regardless of their fields of specialization. Again, it is through their ability to use functional and general English with some degree of fluency that the students will achieve personal satisfaction and their roles as educated citizens will be fulfilled. 'Use' in this context means in the classroom, in the streets, in the offices, in political campaigns in business organizations, in government, and in academic conferences or seminars anywhere in the English speaking world.

The professional profile of a modern qualified technician should include well-developed communication skills and high English language proficiency to help him achieve success in the modern highly competitive global work arena. In the process of educating future technicians special emphasis should be placed on the use of English language. English is important to information technology for various reasons. Information technology is used in businesses and is basically the backbone of the commercial world at the moment. English is the international language of trade currently, and so it is interlinked with information technology in terms of its ability to operate many systems. Also, a vast majority of information on the internet is in English and so in many ways it's necessary to be able to understand English very well in order to understand a lot of the information provided by the internet.

The main thrust of this paper is that Functional English Language is not merely another subject in IUT but a facilitator in the acquisition of engineering and technological education in IUT. Since students will need to communicate with their teachers and fellow students on their special discipline and with the community at large on many areas of human interest, they need a diversified curriculum that will stress functionality in the mobile modern world. The use of English course should be an innovation in IUT and it appears that we have not evolved a standard method of teaching it. Our teaching technique varies from one teacher to another as if we were subscribing to [Sherwin \(1969\)](#) research finding which states that no single teaching method has yet proved its superiority over all others. Let us now discuss the teaching of functional English language at IUT.

2. THE USE AND IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH COURSE AT IUT

One main objective of English language teaching in IUT today is to improve our students' ability to use their medium of instruction as a means of dealing with the experience of living. The approach assumes importance only in so far as they facilitate or obstruct this all-important process. The essential truth about English language in our multilingual society and culture of IUT is that it is the medium through which we communicate and interact with each other in such a way as to create and maintain their rich civilization. Ultimately, our concern should be the teaching of English language expressing function and increasing the ability to understand and feel. Similarly,

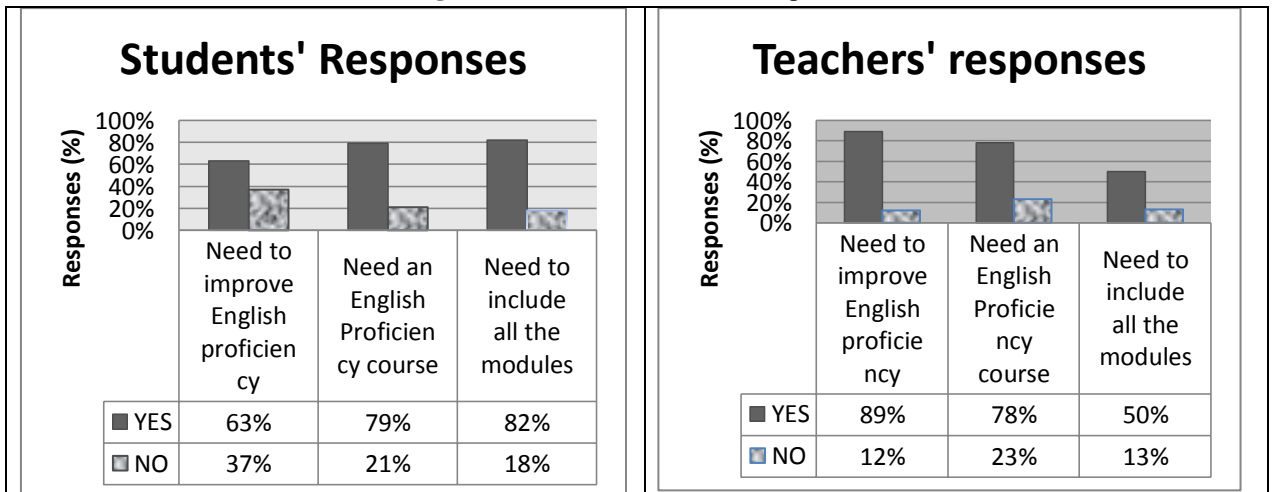
the teaching of the English grammar should be done as an illustration of the structures of scientific, technological and general usage.

If the use of English course is taught in this more broadly based way, what then are the kinds of classroom activity which conduce towards improvement in IUT? Unlike most other teachers, English teachers deal with a medium of instruction which the student has daily experienced and used. He thinks it, speaks it, hears it and reads it every day especially outside the English lessons. Therefore, these teachers are not only dealing with a medium which is already a vital part of a student's equipment for facing life but also one that has strong roots in the immediate environment of the home and the street where it has been fashioned since colonialism. When we accept this as our starting point, it becomes clear that the use of English has an absolutely central role to play in education at IUT, and cannot be thought of as merely another school subject. For this matter, it is my view that such aspects of English as Basic English grammar, fast reading and comprehension, note-taking, oral English, Semester Paper, and essay writing should form an integral part of the Functional English language syllabus, and be taught throughout the first two years of studies in IUT.

In fact, there is the need for IUT to recruit English teachers to teach grammar so as to improve the standard of English of IUT students. Even if grammatical terms are not tested in their exams, the grammar of the language must be known by students if they are to be able to correct their own mistakes. Similarly the grammar of the language must be taught in order to help students perform certain functions as well as use the language effectively in their various disciplines. Nevertheless, whatever grammar is taught at this level should be taught not for the grammar's sake but as a scaffold of scientific, engineering and technology and general use.

Hasan *et al.* (2012) conducted a research in IUT to find out the need of introducing English Proficiency course for the first year students. He took the responses from students and teachers from different departments.

Figure-1. Students and teachers responses



Source: Hasan *et al.* (2012)

Analysis according to the background of the students: IUT is an international university where students are coming from different member states of OIC who bear different academic background with English is a foreign language i.e. their medium of instructions are different. Total students categorized into three broad categories depending on their medium of instruction, which were (i) Bangla (ii) English (iii) Others (to whom medium of instruction was Arabic, French, Urdu, etc).

Table-1. Category of response on the basis of Previous Medium of Instruction

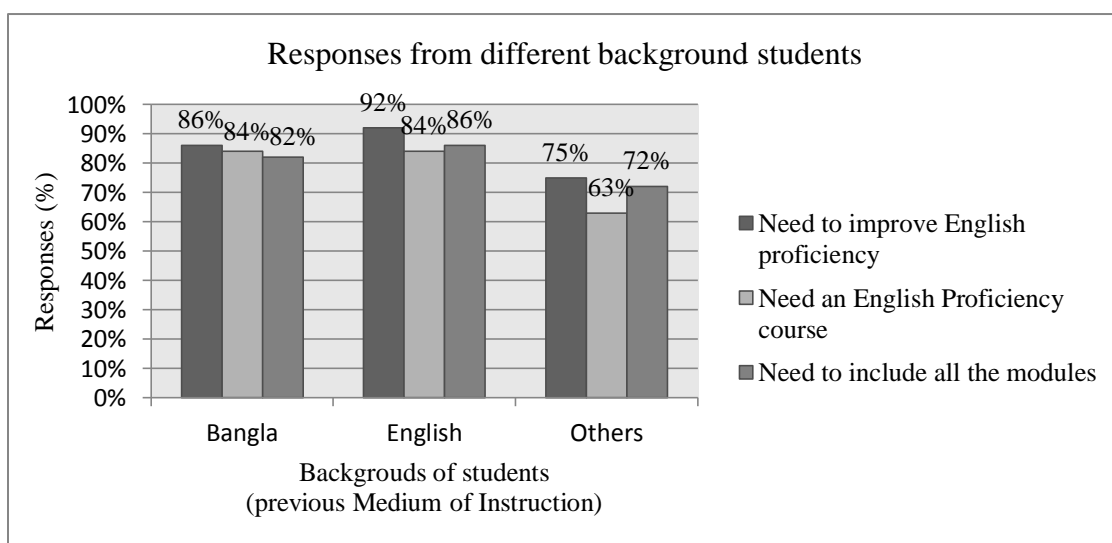
Category of responses	Background of students (Previous Medium of Instruction)		
	Bangla	English	Others
Need to improve English proficiency	86%	92%	75%
Need an English Proficiency course	84%	84%	63%
Need to include all the modules	82%	86%	72%

Source: Hasan *et al.* (2012)

In order to find out the need of EP course, at the very first step data were calculated depending on students and teaches opinions. In the second steps data were analyzed depending on students' previous medium of instruction which is shown the table 2.

Fig 2 reveals that, 86% students of Bangla background feel that they need to improve their English proficiency where 92% students from English background and 75% students from other background bear the same feelings. It can be concluded that 1st year students of IUT need to improve their English Proficiency as majority of students (more than 75%) from all background responded in favor of this.

Figure-2. Responses from different background students



Source: Hasan *et al.* (2012)

He revealed that most of the students from different background were realizing the necessity of improving English proficiency. They also felt for an English Proficiency course (which is termed as Functional English Course in this paper) at the beginning of the whole engineering course. Students recommended including all module (speaking, writing, listening, reading) to be included in the course. The research did not recommend any course outline to fulfill the students need. This research feel the gap recommending a completing course outline for Functional English course. If English language is to be taken seriously as a separate subject in IUT, I will propose here that the subject should be handled by teachers recruited to teach the subject under the direction of a co-coordinator with the following objectives:

- (1) To equip the students with the tools for effective communication so that in his own essay writing (Argumentative writing, Expository writing, Descriptive writing, Narrative writing, Letters, etc) and practical contexts, he will use exact words to construct correct English sentences to achieve the various purposes of communication. Thus, the student is made to employ language as a vehicle for critical thinking and analysis in both technological and general education.
- (2) To help the students achieve efficiency in reading and comprehension by making him aware that slow reading is not efficient reading and that to a point, comprehension improves as reading speeds increase. The student is then trained to acquire reading speeds for different written materials, and methods of taking notes from lectures or books.
- (3) To encourage the student to use written and oral skills flexibly, effectively, and confidently in a wide range of situations in adult life. Thus, the student is led to communicate his cultural and social feelings like an educated man to native speakers of English.
- (4) To enable the student understand how language itself works by exposing him to the agreed devices in the mechanics of writing a semester paper – punctuation, foot-noting, bibliographical listings, etc., furnish him with the information on the resources available to his studies in the libraries of the university and elsewhere, and equip him with the most functional approach to research writing.

The use of English course should be introduced in IUT and should be regarded as a functional and cultivating program which enables students to grow further in the use of English language and to be able to use the language to perform certain social, academic and professional functions in adult life. I may further point out that the use of English as a subject is very important to be introduced in IUT because:

- (1) As English is the language of official communication, including teaching in IUT, it is relevant to all the other disciplines and all the students should profit from it.
- (2) As IUT graduates take on the leading roles in teaching, home and diplomatic services, trade and industry, and determine the political future of their country, there is need to achieve a very high degree of oral and written competence. Thus, even for the few who

obtained distinction grade at their secondary school certificate examination, the course is still very important.

- (3) From time to time, graduates who have studied engineering, technology and allied disciplines are called upon to present papers at Seminars and conferences in adult life. Some of them may not have done English beyond the Secondary School level. For these people, knowledge acquired from the use of English course will be a kind of life – boat in performing such a social and academic function.
- (4) Implicit in all this, is the idea that education is a life – long process. The student is encouraged to regard the course not as complete in itself, but as an illustration of the need to continue improving himself in all areas relevant to life, even after he has left Islamic University of technology.

It will be noticed that the objectives attempt to help students acquire two skills: Communication and research. The duration of the use of English course as I may propose in this paper may be restricted to two Semesters. The first semester should be devoted to the improvement of language skills, fundamentals of grammar and the use of Library. The second semester may be devoted to the acquisition of research competence (Semester Paper), language skills and some aspects of grammar. However, even though I am not an English teacher, I feel this approach will add more value to the students language ability and thereafter, permit them to understanding how to use this English language in writing their term papers and also in writing and reporting small research project as they progress in their engineering programs and after their education programs in IUT.

Each lecturer if appointed in IUT to teach Functional English should be assigned to at least five classes of about fifty students each as maximum. They should have in mind the following aims:

- (1) The study of language in society – the improvement of the skills of writing, reading, listening and speaking in society.
- (2) The study of language in specialized register.

It is not and will not be easy to realize the aims properly without providing a suitable syllabus. Although I am neither a student of English language nor a scholar/teacher of the same, I may suggest also that although there are prescribed text books, copies of mimeographed course materials may be distributed to both the students and teachers. Besides, each teacher should be given a free hand to adopt his preferred teaching methods.

I would wish to propose to the IUT administration a syllabus which may be used for the program mentioned above as follows:

A. Language Skill and Fundamentals of Grammar:

1. Philosophy of language/Motivation
2. Levels of usage
3. Use of library/Introducing the Seminar Paper.

4. Punctuation/Parts of speech
5. Reading/Note-taking
6. Sentences/Inter-sentence relationships
7. Pronouns/Antecedent
8. Complement of verbs/verbs of observation or description.
9. Reported speech
10. Kinds of Essay writing

B. Research Competence and Grammar

1. The Semester paper/Research writing techniques
2. Verbs/Structures of scientific usage
3. Clauses/Phrases
4. Agreements/Verbs of change
5. Prepositional phrases
6. Participles/Action verbs
7. Gerunds/specialized Vocabulary
8. Mechanics/Structures of technological usage
9. Infinitives
10. The Semester Paper

3. THE TEACHING APPROACH

The teaching approach to the course is influenced by Nelson Brook's (1964: 154) very apt analogy which states that:

We must recognize that grammar is to language what anatomy is to human body. Every living body, and even a dead one, is bound to have anatomy. The same is true of language and grammar. To say that grammar can be brushed aside as inconsequential or irrelevant is, of course, nonsense.

In supporting this line of thought, I am not insisting that knowledge of grammar is the only touchstone for acquiring language competence. My view is that grammar provides an appropriate standpoint from which one can look at Functional English in the face and say to it: "Yes, I am acquainted with you".

In the teaching process, the first lecture period may be spent on the philosophy of language and the motivation of students by making them realize the need for a course of this nature; for the success in functional English in IUT, is to motivate the students. The rest of the period may be devoted to grammar and situational writing. Eyibe (1984) has explained that the use of English in higher education is a typical writing course aimed at distinguishing between formal and informal writing as dedicated by situation. To this end, one of the three periods must be devoted to teaching, one for writing and the other for discussion.

4. READING AND COMPREHENSION

Emphasis in the teaching of reading is on speed. Gartside (1975) has rightly observed that “reading is a more important source of most people’s command of language than is sometimes realized. The ability to read efficiently is a valuable personal skill and one in which standards must be raised if we are to make the most of our rapidly growing literary heritage”. Most of the IUT freshmen tend to read too slowly. That is why many of them read with difficulty at IUT and hence put much emphasis on memorization with lack of proper understanding of the lectures. It may seem strange, but tests have shown it to be true, that slow reading is not efficient reading and that to a point; comprehension improves as reading speeds increase. In the teaching of English language in the past in IUT, teachers came against a wall for various reasons: there was no language laboratory equipped with necessary control gadgets; there are no reading experts for the exercise; the classes were too large to follow for essential individual attention.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, a reasonable start is possible because a new language laboratory had been well equipped in the Instructor Training and General Studies (ITS) of IUT. The students will now with the possible introduction of Functional English overcome such bad reading habits as reading as reading single words instead of phrases. The students will then be encouraged to select their reading materials and time themselves with a watch. The use of the watch during reading will help them to achieve the desired speed limit in fast reading and comprehension. It will be better to select passages of about 400 words. The passages should be always increased in length and difficulty as time goes on, but the time needed for reading should remain constant. The reading passages must be answered and marked in class. The aim of this will be to increase the reading rate to 600 words or more per minute, and comprehension to eighty percent or more per minute before the end of the second semester. With systematic practice timed with a watch, a reading speed of about seven hundred words per minute could be realized.

Apart from fast reading, note-taking and note-making hints will be also taught. However, it should be realized that the reading speed varies a good deal with the kind of subject matter. But fast reading involves quick thinking and high concentration if comprehension must take place. Therefore, what will be gained in this aspect of the course can be transferred to engineering, management, science and technology and education studies.

The art of reading is particularly important today. The printed word is the main route to an improved technological and general knowledge of the past, the present and of what makes the natural man-made world tick. It is also the passport to adventure, delight, fun and experience, as well as the provider of insights into human behavior and relationships. But today, Television, Video tapes and the whole means of communication clamour for our attention to inform, educate, horrify and amuse, often, simply to fill up our time. Reading must compete with all these to ensure that all those students who master the basic reading skills when young continue to be readers through adolescent and into adult life. Equally important in the teaching of functional English is the role of the semester paper in the development of the fundamental language skills and concepts.

5. THE SEMESTER PAPER IN THE USE OF ENGLISH

Many schools in Bangladesh today do provide good English teaching, and their pupils achieve very high standards in several aspects. But elsewhere, the picture is patchy. This patchy picture is the reason why any person who teaches English at the post secondary school level will be clearly shocked by the very low standard of many students. The Islamic University of Technology continues to insist that prospective students obtain a credit in English language at the secondary school certificate or General Certificate of Education (GCE) level. When the freshmen register in IUT, he undergoes studies without a functional English course. A few students who come from the non-English speaking OIC countries undergo a further one year use of English course which is remedial in nature. It is probably safe to say that the very low performance of some of our students would not be there if teaching had been effective at the primary and secondary school levels. It is in the light of these seemingly national language problems that we have introduced the writing of a semester paper in the use of English to help students understand how language works and fight the problem of stylistics and rigidity.

According to Eyibe (1984) the semester paper can be defined as a scholarly essay on a chosen standard novel designed to support, disprove or draw scholarly conclusions on a particular theme(s) of a novel. It is a research essay designed to train students in art of the use of Standard English needed in adult life. The use of Standard English is emphasized here because one of the notable functions of language is to record scientific and general observation. Indeed, accuracy and refinement of observation depend directly on the flexibility and resourcefulness of the language available to the observer or researcher. Admittedly, some kinds of exact observation and conclusions are best recorded in mathematical terms, but there is a large extent of human experience for which there is no better medium than language for the 'attempt to render the highest kind of justice to the visible universe'. The training in the use of English in IUT must include the capacity to marshal scientific facts and arguments in such a way as to gain maximum attention to them. However, unlike research thesis, the semester paper is written to satisfy the use of English course requirements. But it anticipates the research thesis. The semester paper, like the thesis, involves a kind of research, which may take any of the following forms: determining the progress made over a period of time on a chosen theme(s) in a particular novel; analyzing the novel and comparing the theme(s) with identifiable theme(s) in another novel(s); supporting or criticizing the theme(s) of the novel. The writing of semester paper involves the learning of the following three skills or methods: selection and evaluation of theme(s) in a chosen novel; assembling the materials from other sources; and research writing techniques.

I believe that functional English course at IUT should be taught along with wide reading of good novels to appropriate levels of proficiency. Brooks (1964) also supports that the study of English language and literature should be integrated, since the latter is wholly and inevitably rooted in the former. He states that "a little reflection reminds us that a dichotomy between language and literature is absurd as a dichotomy between child and man. There is no sharp demarcation, but a continuum. Literature presupposes language. Language and literature are both parts of the verbal

symbolization of experience we call discourse and whoever teaches in these areas must see that their basic oneness is reflected in the activities required of the student”.

Experience has shown that the more people read more standard novels, the more they will get the feel of the language, and the more they will be able to express themselves properly without having to think about how they are expressing themselves. On the importance of reading novels in language learning, [Hundeyin \(2006\)](#) has observed that the only practical, quick and definitive approach to learn a language is for the learner to live among the person who speaks the language for a period of time during which he would be put through the essentials of the language. But I am convinced beyond doubt that the same goal can be achieved by the habitual reading of good novels. The reason for this is obvious. When someone reads a novel, it is like somebody talking to him in the language in which the novel is written. It also has the added advantage that the “Somebody” talks to him at a pace controlled by him if he makes friends with that “somebody” for a prolonged period of time. Certainly his English would undergo transformation to an acceptable standard, even to his own pleasant surprise.

Therefore, the student has to acquire the essentials of English language by himself first, by reading good novels. It is after this, that the work of the teacher becomes easy and rewarding. Many teachers of Use of English in our higher education see the reading of novels and the teaching of language as two lines that define a single limit. One such teacher, [Oluike \(1979\)](#) maintains that “when teachers advise their students to read novels to improve their standard of English, they are expressing their unflinching faith in the traditional method”.

The integration of literature and language in IUT will help to provide opportunities for students to develop in themselves the capacity to ask and try answer the question” “who am I?” After all, to introduce students to scientific and technical education is to rekindle in them a spirit of enquiry, including an enquiry into who they are, where they come from, and how they have arrived where they are. It is the language teacher’s task in IUT to break down students’ narrow horizon and make them partake to the existence of the world. It is also his task to prevent the total invasion of the minds of our students by technology and machines by reminding them that man’s ideal does not consist solely in enslaving matter for his needs but also to multiply his powers of life through the acquisition of a better nourished thought, a more delicate sensibility, and more fraternal soul.

It is indeed by acquainting students with the cult of the desperate shouts, songs of love, hymns of hope, comedies and dramas in the works of the art that a balanced human being can emerge. It is probably safe to say that teachers’ use of English in IUT should aim at a literature ‘qui touché a toutes choses’ (who touches on all things) and insist that the objectives of such literary studies in IUT education include: the provision of a permanent source of pure and inalienable pleasure, and the immediate pleasure of the student in the process of education.

6. EDUCATIONAL RATIONALE FOR A SEMESTER PAPER

Current concepts of education have rejected, with good justification, the role of the teacher as a law-giver and as the repository of knowledge. This is because we live in an era of information

explosion and knowledge implosion. Modern teaching is now learner-centered and teacher's role is really to guide the learner. In many institutions, the students exercise some freedom in choosing their class projects and some learning materials. But elsewhere, the classroom work is dominated by the teacher who does all talking, all the choosing, all the answering and perhaps all the reasoning. The students are over-pampered and are hardly even given the opportunity to find things out for themselves. They are given all notes and all information and are expected to regurgitate these notes during tests and examinations. This system does not encourage functional education. This system of education is now being challenged by the innovative method of teaching contained in the semester paper.

The result of the teacher-dominated learning situation is that students do not really learn and whenever they are faced with an assignment like the semester paper which requires skills and techniques, other than swatting or memorizing, they become threatened. This is our fault as teachers, for if we encourage individual effort by students, they will build up confidence in themselves, and will freely elect to find solutions to problems in their studies. This is where the semester paper takes over in training students in problem-solving and continuous writing.

Therefore, we favour learner-centered as opposed to teacher-centered classroom. After all one of the most significant educational experiences for learners are those they select, plan, and pursue like the semester paper. The aim of which is to develop their potentialities and capacities in the use of English language for effective work at IUT and adult life. In other words, teachers and parents should encourage their students and children to cultivate the habit of reading widely as this is an important but neglected element in the acquisition of linguistic proficiency. The semester paper is aimed at stimulating purpose in the art of reading widely and continuous writing. Any conscious attempt to stimulate learning purpose is a step in the right direction as far as educational theory and practice are concerned. The paper motivates students to engage in learning experiences that significantly contribute to "general goals of education: acquire methods of rational thinking and desire to use them in solving problems, develop interest in engaging in challenging learning activities, and communication skills [Saylor and Alexander \(1974\)](#)".

7. CONCLUSION

The purpose of IUT education is to enable all students as far as possible, to develop their talents in engineering and technology and to be properly prepared to play their part in society and for work. That purpose cannot be achieved in today's world without grounding in functional English studies. As fast- changing technological society makes more demands on people in technological institutions, we in IUT need to be more, not less, proficient in our use of English.

One indisputable fact, therefore, is that language competence is the mark of an educated man. It is the foundation of any kind of education. All subjects in IUT operate through the written or spoken English word. Whether it is a book, a scientific essay, a research paper, or a philosophical treatise, they have to be readable. If they are unreadable, they have failed they have failed in their purpose. Similarly, science and technology which have so largely determined material progress live

by the spoken or written word. Whether we are describing an experiment, proposing a hypothesis, building a power station, or diagnosing a fault in an engine, we rely on the accurate and effective use of the written and the spoken word. People in higher education need to be able to use the spoken and the written English word in variety of ways, to be able to explain, reason, and persuade. For this matter, the first year of two semesters in IUT should be devoted to the studies of language in society with emphasis on the philosophy of language, grammar and the semester paper. The goal of the first year course should be to combat rigidity so that students can use English functionally both in their disciplines and in adult life. The students should be introduced to phonetics and other tools that equip them to acquire the needed linguistic facility for reading, writing, speaking and listening effectively in the various registers of their disciplines. Thus, the goal of the second year program should be to acquaint the students with the art of speaking as well as the varieties of writing: letters, expository writing, narrative writing, descriptive writing, and argumentative writing.

The semester paper in the use of English course is aimed primarily at exposing all freshmen to continuous writing and wide reading. Experience has shown that students write and speak the kind of English they read. If they read good novels, they will invariably write and speak good English. The guess I have is that with extensive reading, students widen their exposure to ideas, writing styles, vocabulary items, grammatical structures, and also strengthen their reading skills. Again, through the kind of novels to be discussed in the semester paper, freshmen in IUT may come to understand and appreciate the diversity of culture and then discover the universality of human experience which transcends cultural barriers. Such an approach to literature, can enhance young people's understanding of present day social and cultural realities, thus equipping them for more effective citizenship roles of today's world.

Curriculum planners believe that education is for the betterment of the society. Planners must therefore consider the society, the learner and the teacher. I have looked IUT as a sample of the larger society and the student within the context of language studies, and have seen that the linguistic problems facing the student need a functional approach. I shall now move on to the teacher. The teacher is an important factor in curriculum planning because the success of any program ultimately depends on him. His level of general education, his own welfare, needs and capabilities are helpful in planning curriculum. The IUT should have a staff development scheme, where within the scheme; the faculty may be encouraged to pursue some studies in language education and communication arts to equip them for more effective language usage in teaching. Finally, the use of English at the Islamic University of Technology must be made a typical writing course, and the material presented to the learner should facilitate a philosophical elaboration of the grammar previously internalized. Thus, I would like to conclude by saying that a functional approach to English teaching will encourage frequent individual writing and will do more to develop language competence, note-taking skills, comprehension and thereby facilitating the total learning skills of the students and also the teaching-learning process in IUT.

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