CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with discussions on features of the ESP courses, the roles and characteristics of ESP materials. It is followed by discussions on the reading process and the factors that affect comprehension of texts. Lastly, it describes the framework of programme evaluation models and guidelines for conducting programme evaluation.

2.1 THE FEATURES OF ESP COURSES

The term ESP formerly stands for English for Special Purposes is used by "an increasing number of scholars, practitioners and institutions to mean English for Specific Purposes (Mackay: 1976). English for Special Purposes is thought to suggest special languages, which many people feel is only a small part of ESP.

Strevens (1977) defines ESP courses as those in which the aims and content are determined, principally or wholly, not by criteria of general education but by functional and practical English language requirements of learners.

In tandem with this, Robinson (1991) describes ESP as an enterprise involving education, training and practice, and it encompasses three major realms of knowledge: language, pedagogy and the students' specialized area of interest, for example business, accounting, law and others.

Mohan (1986) notes that ESP is an example of content-based instruction. The focus of ESP is on content-based instruction because ESP courses are goal-oriented and aimed at equipping learners with the skills needed for academic or work purposes; this would enable them to communicate and perform more efficiently in their respective roles.

Binton et al. (1989 cited in Mohd Noor: 1993) explains that content-based instruction involves integration of content learning with language teaching aims. It refers to the concurring study of language and subject matter, with the form and sequence of language presentation dictated by content material. Content teaching helps language learning as it puts the emphasis on communicating information and not on language used.

Robinson (1991: 34) describes the entire concept of an ESP course design as "a plan of work" which takes into account the language form and functions applicable to the teaching of particular skills needed, in order to perform appropriately in a particular field or vocation. The effects of the syllabus on ESP courses are manifested by the emphasis placed on skills and performance of learners. In addition, Robinson (1991) also points out that the production of a syllabus requires collaboration as well as negotiation with all those involved with the course: organizers, teachers, sponsors and students.

2.2 THE ESP MATERIALS

The introduction of ESP courses and the need for new materials resulted in the production of ESP materials for ESP instructors and students. Swales (1980) states that although ESP textbooks had modest success since 1965, instructors and students did not use many of them. Several factors have led the instructors to produce their own materials.

Swales (1980) notes that there were several substantial reviews on old ESP texts but there is no serious appraisal of the notional scheme on which Longman's extensive Nucleus series is based. Referring to this matter, Ewer (1981) has pointed out, if there is no fully articulated challenge to the content in ESP textbooks, then, there is no necessity to revise the textbooks from the language angle. Therefore, the aspects that need attention are whether it is up-to-date in approach and methodology, communicative, functional, discoursal, and dealing with study skills.

Despite the weaknesses in some of the ESP materials produced earlier, the availability of these materials has brought benefits to both learners and instructors. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) suggest the four reasons for using materials in ESP context, are as a source of language, as a learning support, for motivation cum stimulation and for reference.

It is common that in situations where English is a foreign language, the ESP classroom may be the only source of English teaching. Materials then play a crucial role in exposing learners to the language, which implies that the materials need to present real language as it is used, and the full range that the learners require.

Secondly, as a learning support, materials must involve learners in thinking about and using the language. The activities need to stimulate cognitive not mechanical process.

Thirdly, in order to stimulate and motivate learners, materials need to be challenging yet achievable: to offer new ideas on information whilst being grounded in the learners' experience and knowledge: to encourage fun and creativity. Moreover, the input must contain concepts and/or knowledge that are familiar and something new, a reason to communicate as well as to get involved. The exploitation needs to match input with learning needs and learning situation (Dudley-Evans and St John: 1998).

Lastly, as reference, materials need to be complete, well laid out and self-explanatory or with answers and discussion keys. The materials will need to consider the different learning styles and allow for the explorer who will follow a train of thoughts: the browser, who will pick and choose at random and "systematist" who will work through methodically. Materials that provide a matrix of objectives, skills, language, activity and topic are far more helpful (Dudley-Evans and St John: 1998).

Besides explaining the roles of the ESP materials, Evans and St John (1998) add that ESP materials ought to have the important characteristics listed below.

(a) MATCHING AUTHENTIC TOPIC TO REAL CONTENT

Authentic topic can be used to meet certain objectives of the real content i.e. the language items that must be learned. This matching process can begin from good in-put, continue with deciding what real content it could be exploited and where and how the real content fits into the course. The other alternative begins with course objectives and followed by searching for real content.

(b) PROVIDING VARIETY IN MICRO SKILLS AND IN ACTIVITIES TYPES

Variety is pertinent in an ESP class to reduce boredom and motivate learners. The materials should give opportunity to practise a number of micro-skills, introduce a range of activity types and to vary the types of interaction taking place during the class.

(c) GRADING THE EXERCISES

Grading is concerned with the amount of support provided to enable learners to do a set of exercises, and providing learners with task at different levels of difficulty.

(d) PRESENTING THE MATERIAL WELL

Presenting the materials well includes writing good, consistent rubrics, planning, lay-out, and proofing. Consistency helps learners to focus on working out what to do.

2.3 ESP AND BUSINESS ENGLISH

Ellis and Johnson (1994) note that Business English must be seen in the overall context of English For Specific Purposes (ESP) as it shares the important elements of ESP such as needs analysis, syllabus design, course design, and material selection and development. Further, Business English implies the existence of a specific language corpus and emphasis on particular kinds of communication in a specific context. The difference between Business English and other varieties of ESP is that it often has a mixture of specific content (relating to a particular job area or industry) and general content (the general ability to communicate more effectively, in business situation).

Over the years, the focus on Business English has changed. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the focus was on specialized vocabulary, communication skills and language for functional areas such as giving opinions, showing agreement and others.

Since 1980s, besides all the criteria mentioned above, Business English has placed much more emphasis on the need to develop the skills for using the language learned. The focus has been on presentation techniques, negotiating and effective meeting skills. With regard to the language of Business, Ellis and Johnson (1994) note that the language of Business English is characterized by a sense of purpose. Therefore, the language that is used will neither be as rich in vocabulary and expression, nor as culture-bound, as that used by native speakers, but will be based on a core of the most useful and basic structure of vocabulary.

Another factor that concerns Business English is its learners. Generally, Business English learners are categorized as pre-experience learners or job experienced learners. The needs of the pre-experience learners are to read textbooks or follow lectures or to sit for examination in English in order to gain the qualification they are seeking. They also prepare for their future working life in business such as acquiring skills for business namely skills for commercial correspondence and giving presentations.

On the contrary, the job-experienced Business English learners are pragmatic. For them, the practical use of the language will be more important than theoretical knowledge about the language. The objectives for the course and its contents will be the product of a negotiating process between the learners and the trainer.

The job-experienced learners are mostly adults who have different experiences in the world of business, as social human beings, and as learners in other training environments. They use language to achieve precise objectives. They are often curious about the objectives of particular tasks and will be critical of their own performance, and of that of the trainer. They will constantly evaluate what they are doing, and what is being done. The learning environment is highly influenced by this sense of purpose; therefore materials, exercises, and activities that are selected for use in the classroom must acknowledge this sense of purpose because the job-experienced learners are judgmental regarding the quality of materials used.

2.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF READING

Reading is the construction of meaning from a printed or written message. It is a process of matching information in a text to internally activated information. In other words, reading is not information processing but information interpreting - what we understand from a text depends in part on what we knew previously, as well as on how we allow the text to extend and refine our knowledge of the topic. Reading is the interaction of the text and the reader to produce comprehension (Widdowson: 1979; Carrell and Eisterhold: 1983).

The definition on the previous page explains that reading is a two-fold process: it requires identification of the symbols and the association of appropriate meaning with them. Indeed, reading requires identification and comprehension.

According to Carrel (1988), reading is by far the most important of the four skills in a second language, particularly in English as a second or foreign language. There are at least three groups of students to whom effective reading in a second language is critical for success. (These students are either in EFL context, at advanced levels of proficiency, or those with a need for English for academic purposes).

The importance of English in the commercial sector of the Malaysian Economy is undeniable. In 1981, the faculty of Economics and Management of a local university conducted a survey on the use of English in the commercial sector. Responses from the 137 companies, which participated, indicated that English was important for both job interviews (83.3%) and job promotions (70.8%). These companies required their business executives to have an intermediate and advanced level of English proficiency for listening and reading and advanced proficiency for speaking and writing (Goh and Chan: 1993).

In Australia, Liddicoat (1997) reported that many studies were carried out to ascertain the role of English in the society (Hagen: 1988; Lo Bianco: 1988; Stanley, Ingram and Chittick : 1990; Valverde: 1990; Drysdale and Garnaut: 1993 cited in Liddicoat: 1997). These studies have unanimously show the importance of language skills in a range of professional and business context. As a result of the internalization of the world community and the increasing use of English in professional and business contexts, these studies have shown that language skills are central to successful competition in the world's market places.

In order to acquire information, students at advanced level studies are frequently required to read textbooks, reference materials for completion of assignments and as preparation for examination. The importance of using English to learn has led to the incorporation of reading skills in English For Academic Purposes (EAP), English For Second Language (ESL) and English For Foreign Language Courses (EFL). As English is the lingua-franca of the world, enormous amount of information is conveyed through the English language.

Apparently, only those who are proficient in English can possibly tap into this enormous source of information. This possibly explains why although Bahasa Malaysia is the national language, English language is described by the former Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohammad Najib as a medium for the dissemination and acquisition of knowledge especially knowledge that exists in the printed form (Mohd Najib: 1995).

Various studies have shown that the ability to read English text affects the academic performance of students. The study conducted by Mohd. Faiz Sathi

(1993) reveals that ESL learners at advanced level studies in Malaysia have to do a great deal of their academic reading in English language because the bulk of reference materials are in English even if the medium of instruction and examination are conducted in the national language.

In another study, Ewer and Lattorre (1969) note that the ability to read the appropriate literature in English affects the success in undergraduate work. About a decade later, the study of Carrell (1988) reveals the same fact when she points out that non-native speakers of English learn English in order to read English medium texts. In brief, effective reading is vital for academic success.

The reading ability indeed has great impacts in a person's life. Dechant and Smith (1977) believe that everyman who knows how to read has it in his power to magnify himself, to multiply the ways in which he exists, to make his life full, significant and interesting.

They also hold the view that effective reading is the most important avenue to effective learning. Reading is so interrelated with the total educational process that educational success requires successful reading. Those who fail in school usually have failed first in reading. Bruno (cited in Dechant and Smith 1977) points out that if the first button of a man's coat is wrongly buttoned, all the rest are certain to be crooked. Reading is that first button in the garment of education.

2.5 THE COMPONENTS OF READING

Many researchers share the view that reading is a complex activity. At the turn of the century, Huey (1968) wrote that to analyze reading would be to describe "very many of the most intricate workings of human mind" (Huey: 1968: 7). Gates (1949) states that reading is "a complex organization of patterns of higher mental processes...[that]... can and should embrace all types of thinking, evaluating, judging, imagining, reasoning, and problem solving" (Gates: 1949: 3). There are a number of researchers who liken reading to the "performance of a symphony orchestra" (Gates: 1949: 7).

Fries (1963) while acknowledging the complexity of reading, states that reading consists of only two components, one that allows language to be recognized through a graphic representation, and another that allows language to be comprehended. In sum, the simple view makes two claims: first, reading consists of decoding/word recognition and linguistic comprehension; and second, each of these components is necessary for reading, neither being sufficient in itself (Perfetti: 1977; Gough & Tunmer: 1986 cited in Hoover and Tunmer: 1992).

(a) DECODING / WORD RECOGNITION

To decode a text, a reader begins by working from the smallest units (letters and words) to larger units (phrases, clauses and sentences). This preoccupation with precise letter identification and word identification assigns a passive role to the readers in their language learning. This decoding definition restricts performance and does not reflect the demand expected of the reader in actual reading. Further study on this subject has led Goodman (1967) to argue that syntactic, semantic and pragmatic knowledge are involved in the decoding process.

(b) COMPREHENSION

Comprehension includes the correct association of meanings with word symbols, the evaluation of meanings which are suggested in context, the selection of the correct meaning, the organization of ideas as they are read, the retention of these ideas, and their use in present or future activity (Yoakan: 1951: 32 cited in Denchant and Smith: 1977). Edward (1957 cited in Denchant and Smith: 1977) shares the same view when he describes comprehension as the ability to reason one's way through smaller idea segments and to grasp the meaning of a larger unitary idea.

The brief discussion above provides an insight into the complexity of the reading process and supports the view that reading a textbook or reference is not a mechanical, passive and undiscriminating task (Thorndike: 1917). The discussion that follows seeks to know how readers interact with texts.

2.6 THE LINKS BETWEEN SCHEMATA AND READING

The studies on reading show that both reader and reading text are important to reading. The discussion that follows looks at one characteristic of the reader i.e.

the knowledge that the reader possesses and to what extent it affects comprehension of reading text.

According to Carrell (1983), schemata can be categorized as formal schemata (background knowledge of the formal, rhetorical organizational structures of different types of texts) and content schemata (background knowledge of the content area of a text).

(a) PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

The role of prior knowledge has been formalized as schema theory which suggests that text does not by itself carry meaning (Bartlett: 1932; Rumelhart and Ortony: 1977; Rumelhart: 1980). According to schema theory, reading comprehension is an interactive process between the text and the reader's prior background knowledge (Adams and Collins: 1979; Rumelhart: 1980). Efficient comprehension requires the ability to relate the textual material to one's own knowledge.

The findings of research done on prior knowledge indicate that formal schemata improve comprehension by providing a conceptual framework for interacting with the world. During reading, prior knowledge monitors input and maps it against some existing schemata. Meaning is derived when all aspects of the schema are compatible with the input information.

Rumelhart (1980) conducted a study on first language readers and finds that readers with well-developed content schemata understand and remember its information better than readers who do not. Studies in second language reading also demonstrate this facilitating effect of relevant content schemata (Carrell: 1988; Carrell and Eisterhold: 1983).

Hudson (1982) who studied the effects of induced schemata on the "short-circuit" in second language reading concludes that schema activation can indeed affect reading comprehension of second language learners. He argues that, the induced schemata over-rides language proficiency in reading comprehension and allows access to language decoding which was otherwise not available.

The results of the study also indicate that advanced ESL learners depend less on schema, which is induced directly because they have more facile or robust networks for fitting meaning than do the lower level readers. Thus, the advanced learners are able to use contextual information when attempting to organize material while reading.

Topic familiarity is increasingly seen as a significant criteria determinant of performance in comprehension, particularly that kind of comprehension that requires integration of text information and prior knowledge (Marr and Gormley: 1982; Khalifa: 1977; Aulls: 1986: 124-5).

Grabe (1991) agrees that students need to activate prior knowledge of a topic before they begin to read. If this is absent then they should be given "at least" minimal background knowledge from which to interpret the text. Teachers need to provide background knowledge for the text in order to activate students' schemata and improve their comprehension.

(b) KNOWLEDGE OF TEXT STRUCTURE

To activate or to build text structure knowledge means helping a reader to see relations between ideas, including hierarchical relationships between main ideas and details. Studies in both first language and second language demonstrate that explicit teaching of text structure and application of this knowledge by students in reading process have resulted in better comprehension and recall of information (Carrell: 1984,1985; Swafer: 1988; Wee: 1989; Heng: 1992).

Some researchers believe that the better a text is organized, the better it will be remembered (Armbruster et al.: 1981; Goetz: 1979; Meyer: 1980).

The way a text is organized is greatly affected by the subject of study. As the Science and Business materials are expository texts so the organizational structures found in these expository or informational texts are simple listing, time-order, compare and contrast, cause and effect (Herber: 1978; Ellis and Johnson: 1994). Proponents of this view suggest that one of the ways to improve students' reading is to expose them to the organizational structure of the texts that they are required to read.

Findings from Pearson and Fielding (1991: 827 cited in Urquhart & Weir: 1998) point out that readers who are knowledgeable about, and who can understand the author's text structure, recall more of a text than those who lack these attributes.

The findings from Alvermann and Moore (1991: 960) confirm the effectiveness of teaching students to use text structure to identify main ideas and aid comprehension. In addition, Alvermann (1987) states that students must be shown how knowing the structure of a text helps them to understand the relationship among ideas in the text. Sharing the view of Alverman, Meyer (1980) suggests that instruction on identification and utilization of text structure should precede instruction on identification of main ideas. Nuttall (1996: 100-24) contributes by providing useful advice and sound practical guide on text attack skill as reference to the teacher.

All these findings suggest that teachers need to provide background knowledge for reading text in order to activate students' schemata and improve their comprehension. Besides, teachers should also strive to improve students' knowledge of text structure and equip them with reading skills that can improve their comprehension.

- What : The appropriate objects of evaluation, i.e. objectives, learning gains, materials, teaching resources.
- How : The best means to collect data so that the data are high in quality and the means of collection are economical in their demand on busy teacher, students and administrators.
- Who : Which stakeholders should be engaged in data collection and interpretation; which stakeholders should have access to information or different evaluation process; who should be involved in decision making, given their prior involvement.

According to Weir and Robert (1994), the evaluation of a language programme can focus on objectives, students' achievement, materials or teaching methodology.

Regarding materials evaluation, Weir and Roberts (1994) provide a summary of the variables to be evaluated with both published and "in-house" materials. Some of the variables included in the summary and are used in the evaluation of reading materials for Business English are: suitability, length, challenge-level of text, usefulness, effectiveness, relevance, appropriateness, interest and clarity.

familiar content presented in a lucid manner and couched in the appropriate story grammar of the text will obviously be more meaningful than a text of unfamiliar content (Pearson and Johnson: 1978). A text is said to contain familiar content when the reader possesses relevant schemata or adequate prior knowledge that he can use to facilitate comprehension.

(c) EXPLOITABILITY

Nuttall (1982: 31) refers to exploitation as "facilitation of learning". She explains that when you exploit a text, you make use of it to develop your students' competence as readers. In addition, teachers should ask questions like what we want them to learn in the reading lesson and for what purposes should we exploit the text (Nuttall: 1982: 31).

Hence, it is important that the teacher does not only teach language in the classroom, he or she should attempt to help students understand the reading comprehension. According to Nuttall (1982), an effective reader needs to learn how language is used for conveying content and extract the content from the language that expresses it.

The other argument for reading instruction follows from the findings of survey at the U.S. universities by Ostler (1980), and Johns (1981), and Robertson (1983) which conclude that ESL students used reading skills most, and that all concerned considered it as the most important skill for future academic success.

(d) VOCABULARY

Vocabulary has consistently been found as the most significant predictor of overall readability of text (Chall: 1958; Klara: 1974 cited in Nation and Coady: 1988). The correlations between vocabulary (knowledge of words) and ability to comprehend texts containing these words are high and well established in the L1 reading studies and in the L2 literature (Anderson and Freebody: 1981 ; Laufer: 1989).

Over the years, there are a number of researches that show vocabulary problems as the most important contributors to text difficulty; the acquisition of vocabulary is crucial in developing reading comprehension.

Davis (1988) is positive that the reading comprehension of many students is severely hampered by a simple lack of vocabulary. Wilkins (1972) points out that vocabulary is central to the whole process of language learning. He believes without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed. Krashen (1982) expresses his support for teaching vocabulary by proposing that more vocabulary leads to more comprehensional input and more acquisition of grammar.

Judd (1978: 75 cited in Kenneth: 1982) argues that instruction on vocabulary should not be delayed in ESL learning. Judd (1978) advocates instruction on vocabulary as soon as possible and to consider word use a vital skill in its own right. According to Judd (1978) the benefits of this approach are numerous. One of the benefits is that students will gain a better communicative competence in the language. This truth is probably also applicable to ESP learning.

Readability, suitability of content, exploitability of text and right level of vocabulary should be considered when selecting materials. It is important to provide interesting, suitable, useful and comprehensible materials for teaching and learning. The teacher can help students exploit the text by teaching skills and vocabulary that improve the student's competence as reader.

This completes the discussions on the reading process as well as the reading materials and the chapter proceeds to discussions on the developments and research in programme evaluation.

2.8 PROGRAMME EVALUATION

Programme is a term that has been used to evoke image of a series of courses linked with some common goal or end-product. The way a programme is conducted is based on its curriculum. Curriculum developers perceive curriculum as a body of content to be learned by those who attend a programme, and its mastery at one level is imperative for entrance into the next level of study.

A curriculum usually contains a statement of aims and of specific objectives; it indicates some selection and organization of content; it either implies or manifests certain pattern of learning and teaching, whether because the objectives demand them or because the content organization requires of them. Finally, it includes a programme evaluation of the outcomes (Taba: 1962).

The definition on curriculum emphasizes the following points:

(i) the need for statement of objectives

(ii) the selection and organization of content

(iii) the selection of teaching-learning strategies, and

(iv) evaluation of outcomes.

The above discussion proposes that a sound curriculum is an approved plan of study, with clear and specific objectives, and which forms the framework for the selection of content, teaching-learning strategies and evaluation process.

As the quality and relevance of a curriculum are important in any educational programme, an evaluation of the curriculum should be helpful to ascertain the suitability of a curriculum.

Stufflebeam (1971) defines evaluation as the process of delineating, obtaining, and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives. This definition embodied several implications.

Stufflebeam (1971) believes that evaluation was performed in the service of decision making, hence, it provided useful information to decision makers. Apart from decision-making, Stufflebeam (1971) also explains that evaluation was a cyclic, continuing process therefore it must be implemented through a systematic programme.

The evaluation process included the three main steps of delineating, obtaining, and providing useful information for decision-making. These steps provided the basis for a methodology of evaluation.

Apart form the decision-oriented definition by Stufflebeam (1971), another well accepted definition emphasized the judgemental role of evaluator.

According to Scriven (1967 cited in Worthen and Sanders: 1979: 19), evaluation is the determination of the worth of a thing. It includes obtaining information for use in judging the worth of a programme, product, procedure, or objective or the potential utility of alternative approaches designed to attain specific objectives.

This definition implies that the evaluator did not merely provide information for decision makers. After evaluative data was analyzed and interpreted, the evaluator judged the worth of the object, e.g. curriculum, and communicated this judgement to the individual in the form of recommendation to the individual or group responsible for making ultimate decisions about the programme.

2.9 EVALUATION MODELS

Apparently, the way evaluation was carried out depended considerably on how evaluation was being defined (Worthen, Sanders and Fitzpatrick: 1997: 63). Worthen et al. (1997) point out that if one viewed evaluation as essentially synonymous with professional judgment, the worth of a curriculum would be assessed by experts. If evaluation is equated with measurement, the curriculum might well be judged on the basis of student scores on standardized tests in relevant subject. If evaluation is viewed as a comparison between performance indicators and objectives, behaviourally stated objectives would be established for the curriculum and relevant student behaviour would be measured against this yardstick... Using a decision-oriented approach, the evaluator, working closely with the decision maker, would collect sufficient information about the relative advantage and disadvantage of each decision alternative, evaluation per se would be a shared role.

Based on these various perspectives and approaches to evaluation, many evaluation models were developed. The following pages contain the descriptive characteristics of some models that are related to this study.

2.9.1 TYLER'S OBJECTIVE ORIENTED APPROACH

The individual who was credited with conceptualizing and popularizing the objective- oriented evaluation approach to education is Ralph W.Tyler (Tyler: 1942).

Tyler conceived of evaluation as the process of determining the extent to which the objectives of a programme are actually attained. His approach to evaluation followed steps such as establishing broad goals or objectives, classifying the goal or objectives, defining objectives in behavioural terms, finding situations in which achievement of objectives can be shown, developing or selecting measurement techniques, collecting performance data and comparing performance data with behaviourally stated objectives. Discrepancies between performance and objectives lead to modifications that correct the deficiency and the evaluation cycle is repeated.

Goodlad (1979 cited in Worthern et al.: 1997), points out that Tyler advocated the use of general goals to establish purposes rather than premature pre-occupation with formulating behavioural objectives. Tyler's belief was that service providers primarily needed to discuss the importance and meaning of general goals of their services otherwise the premature specification of behavioural objectives results in objectives that are arbitrary, restrictive and ultimately dysfunctional.

Several evaluation approaches have used goals or objectives as a central focus in the evaluation procedures. Noteworthy objectives-referenced evaluation approaches were those developed by Metfessel and Michael (1967) and Provus (1971).

2.9.2 METFESSEL AND MICHAEL'S EVALUATION PARADIGM

Metfessel and Michael's model reflected its foundation in objective-based measurement with the development of multiple criterion measures for assessing the achievement of programme objectives (Metfessel and Michael: 1967).

The purpose of the model is to formulate recommendation for programme revisions in broad goals and specific objectives. They proposed that the eight evaluation processes are: involving stakeholders as facilitators of programme evaluation, formulating a cohesive model of goals and specific objectives, translating specific objectives into a communicative form, selecting or constructing instruments to furnish measures allowing inferences about programme effectiveness, carrying out periodic observations using content-valid tests, scales, and other behavioural measures, analyzing data using appropriate methods, interpreting the data using standards of desired levels of performance over all measures and developing recommendations for the further implementation, modification, and revision of broad goals and specific objectives.

2.9.3 PROVUS' DISCREPANCY EVALUATION MODEL

Provus (1971) viewed evaluation as a continuous information-management process designed to serve as "the watchdog of programme management" and "the handmaiden of administration in the management of programme development through sound decision making" (Provus: 1971: 8). Provus (1971) viewed evaluation as a process and conceived that as a programme is being developed, it goes through four developmental stages such as definition, installation, process (interim products) and product. The cost-benefit analysis is optional.

During the definition or design stage, the focus of work is on defining goals, processes, or activities, and delineating necessary resources and participants to carry out the activities and accomplish the goals. Provus (1971) considered programmes to be dynamic systems involving inputs (antecedents), processes, and outputs (outcome). Standards or expectations were established for each. These standards were the objectives on which all further evaluation works depend on. The evaluator's job at the design stage is to see that a complete set of specifications is produced and that they meet certain criteria: theoretical and structural soundness.

At the installation stage, the programme design or definition is used as the standard against which to judge programme operation. The evaluator performs a series of congruency tests to identify any discrepancies between expected and actual implementation of the programme or activity. The intent is to make certain that the programme has been installed as it had been designed. If discrepancies are found at this stage, the solutions are: changing the programme definition, making adjustments in the installation, or terminating the activity if it appears that further development would be futile.

During the process stage, evaluation focuses on gathering data on the progress of participants to determine whether their behaviours changed as expected. If the enabling objectives (gains that participants should be making if programme goals are to be reached) are not being achieved, another option is to terminate the programme if it appears that discrepancy cannot be eliminated.

At the product stage, evaluation is to determine whether the terminal objectives for the programme have been achieved. The optional fifth stage called for cost-benefit analysis and comparison of results with similar cost-benefit analysis of comparable programmes.

The Discrepancy Evaluation Model's central focus is on use of discrepancies to help evaluators determine the extent to which programme development is proceeding toward attainment of stated objectives. It attempts to ensure effective programme development by preventing the activity from proceeding to the next stage until all identified discrepancies have been removed. Whenever a discrepancy is found, Provus suggested a cooperative problem solving process for programme staff and evaluators. This particular problem-solving activity was a new addition to the traditional objectives-oriented evaluation approach.

2.9.4 STUFFLEBEAM'S DECISION ORIENTED APPROACH

Stufflebeam (1971) had been an influential proponent of a decision-oriented evaluation approach structured to help administrators make good decisions. He viewed evaluation as "the process of delineating, obtaining, and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives" (Stufflebeam: 1971: 5). He developed an evaluation framework that consists of four types of evaluations to serve managers and administrators facing four different kinds of educational decisions such as planning decisions, structuring decisions, implementing decisions and recycling decisions. The first letters of each type of evaluation - context, input, process, and product have been used to form the acronym CIPP, by which Stufflebeam's evaluation is best known.

The objectives of the Context Evaluation are to define the institutional context, identify the target population and assess their needs, to identify opportunities for addressing the needs, to diagnose problems underlying the needs, and to judge whether proposed objectives are sufficiently responsive to the assessed needs. The findings help managers and administrators to decide upon the setting to be served, the goals associated with meeting needs or using opportunities, and the objectives associated with solving problems i.e. for planning need changes and to provide a basis for judging outcomes.

The objectives of the Input Evaluation are to identify and assess system capabilities, alternative programme strategies, procedural designs for implementing the strategies, budget, and schedule. The findings help in selecting sources of support, solution strategies, and procedural designs i.e. for structuring change activities and to provide a basis for judging implementation.

The objectives of the Process Evaluation are to identify or predict in process, defects in the procedural design or its implementation, to provide information for the programmed decisions and to record and judge procedural events and activities. The findings help in implementing and refining the programme design and procedure and provide a log of the actual process for later use in interpreting outcome.

The objectives of the Product Evaluation are to collect descriptions and judgements of outcomes and to relate them to objectives and to context, input, and process information, and to interpret their worth and merit. The findings will reveal whether there is a need to continue, terminate, modify, or refocus a change activity and to present a clear record of effects (intended and unintended, positive and negative).

2.9.5 SCRIVEN'S FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE EVALUATION

Scriven (1967) categorized evaluation into formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluation is carried out during the implementation of a programme to make rectification to flaws detected in the programme. The evaluation results may contribute to the modification of existing programme or formation of new programme.

Summative evaluation is conducted at the end of the programme and it summarizes the merits of the programme to find out to what degree the goals and objectives of the programme have been achieved.

2.10 ALTERNATIVE VIEWS OF EVALUATION

Apart from evaluation models, evaluation activities also vary according to their authors' philosophical beliefs, methodology preferences, and practical choices stemming from prior experience.

House (1980 cited in Worthen et al.: 1977) grouped evaluation approaches into two categories: objectivism and subjectivism. House (1980) notes that objectivism requires that evaluation information be "scientifically objective", that is, it uses data-collection and analysis techniques that yield results reproducible and verifiable by other reasonable and competent persons using the same techniques. In this sense, the evaluation procedures are "externalized", existing outside of the evaluator in clearly explicated form that is replicable by others and that will produce similar results from one evaluation to the next.

Subjectivism bases its validity claims on "an appeal to experience rather than to scientific method. Knowledge is conceived as being largely tacit rather than explicit" (House 1980 cited in Worthen et al.: 1977). The validity of a subjectivist evaluation depends on the relevance of the evaluator's background and qualifications and the keenness of his perceptions. In this sense, the evaluation procedures are "internalized", existing largely within the evaluator in ways that are not explicitly understood or reproducible by others.

According to Worthen et al. (1997), the debate over the above approaches in the 1980s was a major cause of rifts that permeated the field of evaluation. Later it was reported that although differences in philosophy have led to alternative views of evaluation, the philosophical differences are not incompatible; for thoughtful contemporary evaluators, polarization has given way to integration of perspectives. As a result, multiple approaches to describing objects of study, drawn from both objectivist and subjectivist traditions, have been used in the same evaluation to achieve important goals.

Besides philosophical beliefs, both Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation have influenced greatly the conduct of evaluation studies. Schofield and Anderson's (1984 cited in Worthen et al.: 1977) description of qualitative and quantitative evaluation are found in the following paragraphs.

Quantitative Evaluation also known as Positivistic Paradigm follows the traditional natural science model, emphasizing experimental design to evaluation and statistical methods of analysis. Quantitative Evaluation focuses on the testing of specific hypotheses that are smaller parts of some larger theoretical perspective. Quantitative research emphasizes standardization, precision, objectivity, and reliability of measurement as well as replicability and generalizability of findings. Thus, quantitative research is characterized not only by a focus on producing numbers but on generating numbers which are suitable for statistical tests.

This approach has identified two major categories of research design: true experiments and quasi experiments (Lynch: 1996). In a true experimental approach to evaluation, students are randomly assigned to either the programme of interest or to a "control" condition, such as an alternative programme. The programme students are then compared to the control students, usually by testing them for achievement gains, in order to decide if the programme is having the desired effect.

Quasi-experiments can also compare the programme of interest to a control group, but the assignment to one or the other of these situations is not random. Usually, students, or schools self-select into the programme of interest or that they are selected by someone else for the programme in a non-random fashion.

Qualitative Evaluation or Naturalistic Paradigm is conducted in natural settings, such as schools or neighbourhoods. This approach utilizes the researcher as the chief "instrument" in both data-gathering and analysis. It emphasizes "thick description", that is, obtaining "real", "rich", "deep", data which illuminate everyday patterns of action and meaning from the perspective of those being studied. It tends to focus on social processes rather than primarily or exclusively on outcomes. Qualitative research employs multiple data-gathering methods, especially participant-observation and interviews, and uses an inductive approach to data analysis, extracting its concepts from the mass of particular detail that constitutes the database.

Lynch (1996) notes that many researchers have been engaged in the debate of Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation. Thus far, the debate has moved away from arguing over which approach is best to arguing that they can be used together because there are no important differences, to arguing for keeping them separate because of important philosophical differences.

2.11 EVALUATION OF LANGUAGE PROGRAMME

As mentioned earlier, language programme evaluations are carried out for a number of reasons and with different approaches. Weir and Roberts (1994) look at the evaluation process under the following:

- Why : The goal of the evaluation and the use of the data it produces.

- What : The appropriate objects of evaluation, i.e. objectives, learning gains, materials, teaching resources.
- How : The best means to collect data so that the data are high in quality and the means of collection are economical in their demand on busy teacher, students and administrators.
- Who : Which stakeholders should be engaged in data collection and interpretation; which stakeholders should have access to information or different evaluation process; who should be involved in decision making, given their prior involvement.

According to Weir and Robert (1994), the evaluation of a language programme can focus on objectives, students' achievement, materials or teaching methodology.

Regarding materials evaluation, Weir and Roberts (1994) provide a summary of the variables to be evaluated with both published and "in-house" materials. Some of the variables included in the summary and are used in the evaluation of reading materials for Business English are: suitability, length, challenge-level of text, usefulness, effectiveness, relevance, appropriateness, interest and clarity.

In this study, the evaluation of the reading component is restricted to evaluation of the reading materials used and the reading skills taught. The aim of the evaluation is to know the perceptions of both the students and the lecturers regarding the reading materials (in terms of level of difficulty, level of interest, usefulness and organization) and the reading skills taught (in terms of range, emphasis, applicability and time allotment). The perceptions of both the students and the lecturers will reveal whether the materials used and the reading skills taught cater to the needs of the students. The findings will ascertain whether the reading component fulfills its objectives of helping students improve their comprehension of business texts in order to have good grades in examination.

The framework used in this study reflects the integration of essential characteristics from the objective oriented model and the decision-oriented model. As proposed by the objective oriented model, the study looks at the objectives of the reading component and attempts to ascertain to what extent the objectives are achieved. The study follows the process of defining objectives, translating objectives into communicative form, selecting instruments to measure objectives and making inferences about programme effectiveness by analyzing and interpreting the data gathered.

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the main objective of the reading component is to improve the comprehension ability of CIMA students in TAR College by creating awareness and teaching of nine reading skills. As the reading materials in the reading components are the media used for the teaching and learning of these reading skills so the study is made up of evaluation of the skills taught and the materials used. The study believes that the effects of learning the reading skills can be deduced from the students ability in applying the skills while reading and the improved performance in comprehension tasks. It is a common practice for objective oriented model to measure the achievement of programme objectives by referring to students' performance in tests held at the end of the course. The study however, does not measure programme effectiveness by testing the students. Instead, the study draws conclusions on the attainment of course objectives by analyzing feedback from questionnaires and interviews. The study also possesses the characteristics of decision-oriented model which defines evaluation as the process of delineating, obtaining and providing useful information for decision making. On the whole, the study uses the findings of the questionnaires and interviews to decide whether to make changes to the skills taught and the materials used. This information helps in deciding whether to modify the activity, to maintain the materials, to continue the programme or terminate it. The study is a qualitative evaluation as it yields descriptive data such as perceptions and views of students and lecturers regarding the reading component. As the study is conducted at the end of the course instead of throughout the course, the study is also called a summative evaluation.

2.12 THE FUTURE OF EVALUATION

Worthen et al. (1997) believe that evaluation will continue to spread rapidly around the globe, until there are few countries, territories, provinces, states, and locales in which programme evaluations are not at least an occasional occurrence.

They believe that evaluation will become an increasingly useful force for improving programmes, policy making by governing authorities, societies through improving their various institutions and improving even itself. They also predict that evaluation will expand into fields such as psychology, health, and social sciences including criminal justice, economics, and family welfare, to play important roles in natural sciences and variety of other fields as yet less touched by programme evaluation.

In addition, they note that evaluation will become increasingly institutionalized in the United States and in other developed countries as the pressure for accountability weighs heavily on government as other institutions and evaluators become more skilled in providing useful information to decision makers. Evaluation of the future will be more politically sophisticated than has been the case previously.

As a profession, programme evaluation will grow slowly but steadily. The American Evaluation Association (AEA) and other societies of practising evaluators and / or evaluation theoreticians will continue to contribute to the maturation of the evaluation process. Although evaluation will continue to possess many attributes of a distinct profession, it will still lack means for credentiating evaluators or accrediting evaluation training programme for some time.

The increasing sophisticated evaluation clients will request information about competence and credentials of potential evaluators. While the evaluator's less formal "credentials", such as training, experience, prior track record, and references, may suffice for a time, Worthen et al. (1971) anticipate this pressure will one day be sufficient to give professional evaluation associations the necessary nudge for them to give formal certification to evaluators.

The future evaluation literature will increase in both quantity and quality, but relatively little of it will be research based. The empirical knowledge base in evaluation will increase very slowly and much of that will be primarily a by-product of training, as experienced evaluation faculty supervises graduate students in conducting original studies that will add to what is known about evaluation.

The future evaluation will be more eclectic and less doctrinaire fashions. Their usefulness will lie less in having any one of them serve as a model to be followed slavishly but rather, as collectively comprising the grammar of evaluation that evaluators must understand and be skilled in using.

As for philosophical and methodological future, programme evaluation will continue to be pluralistic, and fundamental differences will continue to separate some who will adhere to divisive, polarized views of epistemology and methodology. However, these differences will be of interest to very few evaluation practitioners. The stridency over alternative paradigms and methods has largely subsided, as pragmatic evaluators have found it both possible and productive to draw on both the objectivist and subjectivist traditions in developing multiple approaches to describing the programme they evaluate.

Electronic and other technological advances will inevitably alter techniques of data collection and analysis in evaluation. New software development, relational databases, and trend analysis of existing databases will open new vistas for evaluation. All these advances will permit data collection to be much more rapid, reliable, and valid than is now the case.

Finally, technology will also alter the way evaluators report. In future, electronic audio, and video reports are certain to increase in popularity. Worthen et al. (1997) believe that progrmme evaluation will greatly improve the practice and products of the programmes that are evaluated in the years ahead.

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