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Analyzing the current English language teaching materials in line with the academic and professional needs and interests of diploma theology students

Wakgari Deressa^{1*}, Yohannes Tefera² and Adege Alemu²

*Correspondence:
wakgaridheressa@gmail.com

¹ Department of English
Language and Literature,
Mettu University, P.O Box 318,
Mettu, Ethiopia
Full list of author information
is available at the end of the
article

Abstract

The study analyzed the current English language teaching/learning materials in line with the academic and professional needs and interests of diploma theology students. The study was a descriptive survey that made use of a mixed-method approach. Thus, the researcher employed convergent parallel mixed method design. The data were collected using a questionnaire, interview, and content analysis. The participants of the study were second and third-year diploma theology students, former theology students, and English as a Foreign Language instructors. All the students (112) were chosen using comprehensive sampling technique, and five former theology students who were working as priests and evangelists were chosen using the snowball technique to fill out the questionnaire. EFL teachers were also chosen for the interview. Additionally, the skills of three units of the current English language teaching materials were evaluated using the checklist. The reliability of the questionnaire was checked using Cronbach Alpha, and the quantitative data were analysed using SPSS version 22. The study revealed that both students and EFL teachers perceived the teaching materials as they less assist the students in their academic and professional contexts. Finally, the researcher recommended that preparing teaching materials that fit the needs and interests of the students.

Keywords: Teaching materials, English as a Foreign Language, Professional, Theology student, Need analysis

Introduction

Today, English language plays a great role in the scientific, political, religious, cultural and business areas in many countries in the world. Although it is considered as a foreign language in Ethiopia, it is widely used for academic and non academic purposes. It is undeniable that the growths of communicating internationally and introducing the free market economic system in Ethiopia have attracted a lot of foreign investors to the country (Tadele & Haileleul, 2015). However, the Ministry of Education in Ethiopia (MoE)

(2002) states the following points regarding the status of English language in the country which is considered below standard as follows:

The low mastery of the English language at all levels of the educational system is a glaring weakness. In order to correct this situation, special attention will be given to the training of teachers. Native speakers of English will, with the aid of language laboratories and other teaching aids, teach students enrolled in teacher training colleges. Short upgrading courses will also be offered to those currently teaching the subject. Efforts will be made to improve the English language skills of the student, through improving the existing teaching-learning materials and develop and distributing additional reading materials.(p.113)

There are various reasons that hinder the improvement of English language proficiency in Ethiopian context. For instance, Yohannes (2015) states that English in Ethiopia is a medium of instruction from secondary school through higher education, but the learners' proficiency remains poor and the effectiveness of English language teaching remains questionable, despite the efforts undertaken by the Ethiopian Government and concerned institutions. Teachers at schools and employers in industries have been complaining about the low level English language competence of students and graduates (p. 12).

One of the reasons behind is that the absence of the native speakers' interaction outside of the class and exposure they have to use the language. In fact, people in Ethiopia consider English only as a language of classroom, although people use it for different purposes in their daily activities, and in different governmental and non governmental office. For instance, as Teka (2009) states that most huge business firms, banks, insurance companies, Ethiopian Airlines, and others use English as a working language in Ethiopia.

Statement of the problem

Nowadays, the importance of ESP which is based on learners' language needs is commonly observed in different fields for particular purposes. For instance, English for Bible and Theology (EBT) is one of the fields that require ESP learners' needs. Religious educations like Bible and theology courses are currently given in Ethiopia using the English language as a medium of instruction in the seminaries for different educational programs like a diploma, bachelor, masters, and doctorate in theology. Therefore, theologians usually need English courses that help them to communicate with people whose culture and language are different from Ethiopians.

On the other hand, the current researcher observed a lot of problems as he was a partimer in the seminary. The problems were student's low level of English proficiency, low use of the English language in the class and outside of the class, and the materials lacked theologically related terminologies. He observed that when priests, pastors, and evangelists failed to preach the Bible in the English language and translate the English preaching into local languages. In the same way, one of the reasons for learners' weak communicative skills might be due to the mismatch between learners' interests and needs, and the current contents of English language teaching materials. In the same way, as Tilahun (2003) stated in his thesis, English language teaching materials which Meserete Kristos College in Addis Ababa has used for both advanced diploma

and degree program theology students were prepared and used by Addis Abeba University (AAU) for the learners of different academic fields. The teaching materials have been designed for College of Teachers' Education or for other disciplines which are different from the aims of theology in case of the skills needed. However, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) stated that the contents of teaching material should be prepared in line with the needs of the learners. However, the evidence obtained from the subject instructors, including the current researcher, English language teaching materials that have been used in the Seminaries were not designed by assessing the students' needs and interests. Thus, in this study, the current researcher is initiated to analyze whether English language teaching materials in the Seminaries were designed in line with the academic and professional needs and interests of the students or not.

Besides the above problem, the mission of theologians are not only limited to their own country as their major missions have been internationally aimed to preach and expand the Gospel all over the world. This mission was given by Jesus Christ to His disciples to preach the Gospel to all nations and to all tribes regardless of language and ethnic group as written in Matthew (28:19),

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen".

Thus, this study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. What are the theology students perceptions concerning the skills or tasks included in the current ELT materials?
2. What are EFL teachers' perceptions concerning the skills or tasks included in the current ELT materials?
3. What problems do Theology college students anticipate to face after they graduate in using the English language within their particular professional areas?

Review of related literature

Definitions of English for specific purposes

Though there is no single definition for ESP, different scholars defined it in different ways as follows. For instance, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define it as "an approach to language teaching which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" (p.16). According to Harmer (1983), ESP is explained as when some occasions force the student to learn a language for a particular purpose.

Another scholar defined it as a language of course or program of instruction in which the content and aims of the course are fixed by the specific needs of a particular group of learners (Richards & Schidt, 2010). ESP lets the students be ready to use English for educational or occupational purposes like for doctors, nurses, engineers, and theologians. Besides, Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) redefine ESP as absolute and variable characteristics as follows:

As absolute characteristics:

- ESP is planned to meet the specific needs of the learners;
- ESP is planned primarily to help learners use of methodology and tasks of the disciplines it serves;
- ESP mediates different language structures like grammar, lexis, and register, and skills and different genres which are suitable for these tasks;

As variable characteristics:

- ESP might be associated with or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP is used in specific teaching contexts which is different from teaching methods used in general English
- ESP is probably planned for adult learners at the university level or professions on careers. It can also be designed for secondary school level learners;
- ESP can be designed for intermediate and advanced learners (pp. 4, 5).

Other scholars Mackay and Mountford (1978) define ESP as teaching English for a particular purpose. This indicates that ESP is used to satisfy learners' needs during academic, professional, or scientific purposes. In the same way, Munby (1978) adds that "ESP courses are those where the syllabus and materials are determined in all essentials by the prior analysis of the communication needs of the learners" (p. 2). This means that ESP and learners' needs are the two sides of the same coin since they are inseparable.

Similarly, according to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the significance of the English course makes learning easier and faster to the learners' needs. For this reason, analyzing learners' needs became one of the fundamental features of the ESP courses. Besides, according to Jameel (2012), General English and ESP are a little bit different. For instance, General English helps learners to be ready for a variety of English needed in their daily activities like different improvement of communicative skills in listening, writing, reading, speaking, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. On the other side, ESP is designed based on learners' needs using needs analysis for specific purposes. Similarly, Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 53) state the following points about the difference between GE and ESP, "in theory nothing, in practical a great deal." practices in GE class, teachers give due attention for the language skills in general and plan to teach a course which fulfills the learners' interest whereas in ESP teachers give more emphases to needs analysis and teaching material writers as well as to the students' goals.

Again, Jameel (2012) stated before designing teaching materials, the learners' interest and levels should be considered. When the teaching materials and learners' needs and levels mismatch, there will be discouragement that causes failure. Thus, this study aims to analyze whether or not the teaching materials were designed in line with the needs and interests of students in Mettu Terfa Jarso Seminary and in other seminaries which assist them in their academic and professional contexts.

English for bible and theology (EBT)

Today, in the world, the English language is an influential means of communication. Especially, in the era of globalization, different workers need to use multi-languages to communicate with many people. Trade, politics, religion, tourism, sciences, and media need multilingual abilities in the globalized world. Thus, in the field of theology, English for Bible and Theology plays a great role in Bible schools and seminaries. According to Pierson et al. (2010), English for bible and theology (EBT) is the English that the theology students use in the process of teaching and learning in theology classes, teaching–learning materials, sermons, articles, etc. They also state a sub-branch of EBT, which is theological English (TE). Theological English focuses on the issues of English that relate to the study of theology such as theological terminologies, different complex sentence structures which are applied in theological writing, and patterns used by theologians in their teaching and writing. Therefore, the main aim of teaching Theological English is teaching how to use English in theology contexts rather than to learn the theology concepts.

Similarly, most Bible schools and seminaries use the English language as a medium of instruction. Thus, it is very useful to study the origins of the language during translations. Theologians, especially those majoring in textual studies are forced to study Hebrew and Aramaic to master Old Testament and Greek and Latin to master New Testament and Patristic. In Africa, languages and dialects are in thousands, and most of them relate to these ancient text languages to some degree. Some of them carry grammar and vocabulary that defines the biblical concepts better than the English language.

On the other hand, according to Pierson (1999), by the time learners' English language needs comprise activities like reading theology textbooks, written assignments about the history of a church, classroom discussions, biblical related issues, and maybe preaching or teaching Gospels, such learners can gain a lot from these kinds of ESP that is called English for Bible and Theology. He also adds that high-intermediate and advanced learners can typically develop more quickly as resources and learning tasks focus on:

- The content students study within that Bible and theology course work (and for some their future ministry),
- The discipline-specific language they must master, and
- The range of tasks they will need to handle in English (p. xii).

Pierson et al. (2010), adds that EBT consists of different courses associated with the ESL or EFL and to Bible and theology courses. EBT lessons focus on parts that are not always academic, for instance, assisting learners studying general biblical terms, recognize English lectures, or reading journal articles' the English Bible or Christian written for a lay audience. EBT classes are more related to academic topics though the skills that students want to publish a theological article, listening to Bible-related topics, debating on theological opinions and articles are written by other scholars. The writer again adds that by the time the learners should learn all their Bible and

theology courses in English, their EBT courses have to consist of all the four English skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Pierce (2018) also states that theological English is the English that is utilized to converse biblical and theological truths carefully, accurately, and efficiently within the theological fields or settings. This method to English in theological settings must be related to the language which we commonly use in our day-to-day activities. This indicates that technical words which are commonly observed in theological English should balance what people use in both contexts of the social daily activities and theological contexts.

Pierce again adds, at the beginning of his textbook introduction, that Theological English must contain a few special areas of focus for non-English native speakers who want to study theology. Maybe the most important areas are a comprehensive focus on advanced grammar for theological purposes and an introduction to, as well as practice within, specific theological fields like apologetics, biblical studies, church history, systematic theology, and practical theology. When the learners exercise grammatical accuracy and precision, they become fluent communicators of the biblical truths to world people very well in need of the gospel. He also adds that activities in Theological English should focus on assisting the learners to use theological English to communicate the truth of the gospel. The activities are designed to provide chances for the learners to use the language skills the students have learned that can be easily applied to real-life situations. Theology students have special real-life situations like writing an email to a leader pastor or a congregant, communicating or preaching the gospel with a non-believer, or guiding a weekly Bible study. Therefore, the activities in Theological English, especially where English is given as a foreign language, assist the theology learners to rehearse the activities which they will meet in the teaching situations.

As it is known in almost all Bible and Seminaries in EFL case where English is used as a second or a foreign language, learners use their mother tongue when they do different activities. These activities are like paying attention to lectures, discussing with instructors, and written assignments in the majority of these organizations. Few theological articles are written in a native language. The domination or the influence of learners' mother tongue is also true in Mettu Terfa Jarso Seminary where this study is being conducted. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the English language teaching materials which are currently used in the seminaries whether or not designed to assist learners for Theological Purposes.

Materials and methods

Research design

This study was designed to analyze diploma theology students' ESP needs. The study, therefore, is a descriptive survey that makes use of a mixed-method approach. Thus, the researcher employed convergent parallel mixed method design. This helped the researcher to obtain a valid and reliable data for the study more significant representations of accurate information and to gain more insights of the issues on the research questions and its objectives in a natural way (Denzin & Lincon, 2000).

Study context

The seminaries are found in Oromia, Ethiopia. They were established by the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekene Yesus to train ministers in theological education at diploma level.

Participants of the study

The population of the study was first and second year diploma theology students, EFL teachers, theology instructors in the seminaries and former theology students. The number of first year second year students was 112. Again, five (5) former theology students who have been on duties were considered as the population of the study. Totally, 117 theology students were the participants of the study to fill the questionnaire. In the same way, the numbers of EFL teachers who have been teaching in the seminaries were two. And, a number of subject teachers who teach theological courses were eight.

Samples and sampling techniques

In order to choose the sample students for questionnaire and sample EFL teachers for interview, the researcher used comprehensive sampling technique. This was done because the nature of comprehensive sampling technique when the population of the study is small in number and easily manageable, all samples will be chosen. That means all 112 students were taken using comprehensive sampling technique, and five former theology students who have been working as priests and evangelists were chosen using snowball technique to fill out the questionnaire. Both EFL teachers and two theology instructors were chosen using purposive sampling out of eight instructors for interview.

Instruments of data collection

The researcher used questionnaire, interview and content analysis of the current English language teaching materials. They were used as data gathering tools.

Methods of data analysis

The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. In descriptive survey method, mixed research methods were utilized. That means both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were applied.

Ethical consideration

When conducting any scientific research, ethical issues should be considered. Informed consent was obtained from all research participants, and all of them had to get the important information about the research, like its process and use, as well as the risks, advantages and uncertainties (McKay, 2006). In addition, according to Duff (2008), the researcher reported the findings truthfully, precisely and responsibly. To care for the respondents' security, privacy and anonymity, the researcher should take great responsibility (Babbie, 2014). Thus, in this study the researcher asked their willingness and got permission before conducting the study. He informed them the purposes and the reason why he conducted the study. He also would never publicize any information relating to the participants' privacy.

Table 1 The reliability statistics for the questionnaire

| Cronbach's alpha | Cronbach's alpha based on standardized items | N of items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| 0.81 | 0.799 | 56 |

Table 2 Descriptive statistics analysis of students' and teachers' perception toward the current tasks in ELT

| Descriptive statistics | | | |
|--|---------------------|---------|-------|
| | Mean | SD | N |
| Perception | 3.7009 | 0.71033 | 117 |
| tasks | 1.4359 | 0.56301 | 117 |
| Students' and Teachers' Perception toward the current tasks in ELT | Pearson Correlation | 1 | 0.070 |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | | 0.226 |
| | N | 117 | 117 |
| Tasks and Activities needed for diploma theology students | Pearson Correlation | 0.070 | 1 |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | 0.226 | |
| | N | 117 | 117 |

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

$r = 0.07, N = 117, p < 0.01$

Reliability analysis of questionnaires

To check the reliability of the questionnaire, the researcher used Cronbach Alpha. According to Perry et al. (2014), Cronbach Alpha which ranges from 0.90 and above shows excellent reliability; 0.70–0.90 shows high reliability; 0.50–0.70 shows moderate reliability; 0.50 and below shows low reliability. The result of the pilot study that indicated the reliability of the questionnaire was calculated by Cronbach Alpha as follows.

Table 1 above shows the data which were collected from 117 respondents using 56 questionnaire items. The reliability statistic was measured using Cronbach Alpha which is 0.81. Therefore, one can conclude that the questionnaire's items were reliable since the reliability index was ranged between 0.70 and 0.90 that showed high reliability.

As we can see from Table 2, a mean value of students' and teachers' perception toward the current ELT is 3.7, which means this value lies between 'rarely needed and not needed'. However, the mean value of tasks and activities needed for diploma theology students is 1.4 which lies between 'the most needed and moderately needed'. This comparison helps us to answer, especially, research questions numbers 2 and 3, which says, 'what are the theology students' and EFL teachers' perceptions concerning the skills included in the current ELT materials?, and what type of tasks and activities should be designed for diploma theology students which assist them to develop their language skills in both academic and professional contexts?.

To compare these two issues, it is important to use Pearson correlations. According to Perry et al. (2005), the statistical measure of correlation in Pearson that ranges from -1 indicates a perfect negative correlation, to $+1$, indicates a perfect positive correlation. A value of zero indicates no correlation at all. Table 2. shows that there is an extremely low

relationship between the students’ and teachers’ perception towards the current English language teaching materials, and tasks and activities needed for diploma theology students as the Pearson correlation coefficient that ranges below 0.20. This is due to the *r* value of the students’ and teachers’ perception, and the tasks and activities needed for them is 0.07. Based on this, it is possible to conclude that the students perception toward the skills in the current teaching materials and their needs of English language skills for their academic and professional needs and interests are mismatched.

Analysis of questionnaire

The results obtained from the Seminaries’ students using questionnaire about theology students’ needs and interests to address research question number 1 about “What are the theology students perceptions concerning the skills included in the current ELT materials?” the results are presented as follows (Table 3):

The above table shows that theology students needs and interests concerning the current teaching materials whether or not assist them to recognize and learn the fundamental concepts of English theological thinking, and helping them to use English as a tool for missionary purposes in order to present biblical truth, consult believers, and interact within church settings, the respondents responded that they disagreed with the items. In the same way, helping them to understand theological articles, Bibles and books written in English as well as the teaching materials are concerned with the principles of CLT and are compatible to their needs and interests of the students; the respondents perceived the materials did not assist them to meet their academic and professional needs and interests. In general, the responses given by students to all items were almost the same. The mean average was 2.82 which is almost closer to 3 (disagree). That means the majority students disagreed and their perception toward the current teaching materials was negative. Thus, one can conclude that students perceived the material as it did not assist them in their academic and professional contexts.

Analysis of interview

The responses that were given by the EFL instructors during interview about the types of contents needed in the ESP or in the field of theology whether or not assist students

Table 3 Perception of theology students on the current ELT materials

| No. of items | | Mean | SD | No. of respondents |
|--------------|--|--------|---------|--------------------|
| 1 | The materials assist you to recognize and learn the fundamental concepts of English theological thinking | 2.7826 | 0.95139 | 117 |
| 2 | The materials help you to use English as a tool for missionary purposes in order to present biblical truth, consult believers, and interact within church settings | 2.8696 | 1.01374 | 117 |
| 3 | The modules help you to understand theological articles, Bibles and books written in English | 2.6522 | .88465 | 117 |
| 4 | The teaching materials are concerned with the principles of CLT | 2.9130 | 1.08347 | 117 |
| 5 | The modules are compatible to your needs and interests | 2.8696 | .91970 | 117 |
| | Mean | 2.82 | | |

N.B: 1. Strongly agree, 2. Agree, 3. Disagree, 4. Strongly Disagree, 5. Can’t decide

in both current and future careers. The first informant's responses were summarized as follows: *As to me, the types of contents have to come out of the students themselves. Let us teach what they need, and if you make need assessment based on own observation, it is not enough. Initiation of curriculum development should be from need analysis, and need analysis is what you are doing now. This need analysis, focuses on teachers' perception in which teachers look into. An other one is the materials to be designed have to include the general English and the theological related English. If you focus only on the reading of theological English, how can you communicate with others in the real world? They suffer when communicating with other people in the community. Meaning, their religion affiliation and balancing with what we call social competency and their target competency is important.*

Based on the above questionnaire and interview results, one can say that the students and teachers perceived the materials as they did not assist them in their academic and professional contexts. Again, concerning the contents of English language that are needed in the field of theology, great attention should be given for both general English and theological related English which the current ELT materials did not consider theological English at all.

Regarding to the research question number 3, "What problems do theological college students, anticipate to face after they graduate, in using the English language within their particular profession areas?" The first informant answered raised follow points. *From my experience, the students whom I taught do have gaps in almost all skills. For instance, They have problems in vocabulary. If they are not rich in vocabularies, they can not communicate as they have shortage of words to use. If you give them audio materials by down loading from internet, preaching from youtubes they could not understand, and they have problems in listening natural English. At the same time, if you tell them the truth about your life experiences, and the evangelical life experience, very few of them will talk well about it. They do not want to make errors, and at the same time the majority of them off from school for long period of time. Writing at college and university level is not writing a sentence, or not writing a simple paragraph. It requires matured analysis and synthesizing.*

An other informant stated the following when the researcher asked the question that says, "What problems do theological college students anticipate to face after they graduate in using the English language?" *I think there might be many problems that face diploma theology students after their graduation in the professional world. For instance, the materials what they are using is totally related to the language of classroom which were prepared for teaching teachers. The students are using these materials which have no technical terms that related to theological issues. In order to give different services in church, they must know and use how to whorship, pray, bless and give different related services.*

Here, the informants stressed that the problems that theology students have in English language skills related to all skills. They also stressed that the ways they were chosen to join to different seminaries were not based on their academic performance, but based on spirituality matters.

Table 4 The learners' needs vs the contents of the materials

| No | Skills | The current ELT materials | | | The students' needs | | |
|-------|------------|---------------------------|----------------|------|---|------------|------|
| | | Contents | Percentage (%) | Rank | The most needed skills (Of 117 respondents) | Percentage | Rank |
| 1 | Speaking | 8 | 21.6 | 2 | 110 | 94 | 1 |
| 2 | Listening | 3 | 8.1 | 6 | 101 | 86.3 | 2 |
| 3 | Reading | 4 | 10.81 | 4 | 82 | 70.1 | 4 |
| 4 | Vocabulary | 4 | 10.81 | 4 | 60 | 51.3 | 6 |
| 5 | Grammar | 13 | 35.1 | 1 | 65 | 55.6 | 5 |
| 6 | Writing | 5 | 13.5 | 3 | 91 | 77.8 | 3 |
| Total | | 37 | 100 | | – | – | – |

Analysis of ELT contents

Table 4 shows that the students' needs of English language skills, and the skills which were presented in the current modules did not match in the proportionality and the students' needs. For instance, 94% (110 of 117) of the students needed speaking skills as the most important skill, however, 35.1% (13 of 37) of the modules were covered by grammar tasks or contents. On the other side, the students' needs regarding grammar were 55.6% (65 of 117) which took less percentage. Again, the students needed listening at 86.3% (101 of 117) as the most needed skill, but it covered the least portion in the current teaching materials which is 8.1% (3 of 37).

Based on the data in Table 4, it is possible to conclude that there is a mismatch between learners' English language skills needs for theological purposes with the contents and proportionality of the skills in the teaching materials. Therefore, before designing teaching materials, the learners' needs and interests should be collected. Then, based on their needs and interests designing the teaching materials is the safest way.

Discussions

The study aimed to analyze the current English language teaching materials in line with the academic and professional needs and interests of diploma theology students. The data were gathered from students using questionnaire, and from EFL teachers using interview, and content analysis using checklists. As it was discussed in the analysis section, both students and teachers perceived the skills in the current teaching materials as they did not satisfy and did not meet theology students needs and interests in both academic and professional contexts. This might be because of the design of the teaching materials which did not consider the needs and interests of theology students. Regarding to this point, Kaewpet (2009) pointed the the move from English for general purposes (EGP) to ESP is often activated by an aspiration to improve language provision via offering a curriculum that can meet learners' needs. This means needs of theology students should be considered in designing teaching materials rather than offering them what was prepared for teaching teachers education. Pierce (2018) also added that theological English is the English that is utilized to converse biblical and theological truths carefully, accurately, and efficiently within the theological fields or settings.

Similarly, EFL teachers stressed during interview that great attention should be given for both general English and theological related English that the current ELT materials did not consider the issues of theological English at all. That is why Crystal (1969, p. 148) emphasizes the fact that “as a source of linguistic effect, religious language is very evident within literature, where a deliberate, evocative use may be made of its terminology and phraseology; or in humor, where one may readily cause laughter by discussing a nonreligious topic, such as a cricket match, in the tone of voice, grammar, and vocabulary associated with religious language use”. However, as a general, individuals might say that in English language, religious English contains a place that is far from peripheral, and on the other hand, that linguistic expression plays a vital role in religious expressions and practice (Crystal, 1969). Chen (2014) also states that English for Specific Purposes emerged in the 1960s in response to the drawbacks of general English in satisfying the students’ needs. Again, the result of content analysis indicated that there is extremely low relationship between the students’ perception towards the current English language teaching materials and the skills that theology students need. Pearson correlation coefficient showed 0.07 which means extremely low relationship.

The next research question was, “What problems do theology college students, anticipate to face after they graduate, in using the English language within their particular profession areas?” This issue was discussed above in detail, and the researcher used interview question to answer it. One of the theology instructors informed that theology students might have problems almost in all English skills, especially in writing, listening speaking and vocabulary because of their background as they were out off school for a long period of time, the inappropriateness of the teaching materials and the environment in they grew up. This issue was supported by Jameel (2012). He states that before designing teaching materials, the learners’ interest and levels should be considered. When the teaching materials and learners’ needs and levels mismatch, there will be discouragement that causes failure. Similarly, the way they were selected for the program is not academic based, but they were selected based on spirituality matters. Their reading habits which were very poor also one of the identified problems. The informant stressed that even after they join to the seminary, they did not want to use library to read and improve their reading skills. However, Pierson (1999) stressed that English for bible and theology (EBT) consists of different courses associated with the ESL or EFL and to Bible and theology courses, and EBT lessons also focus on parts that are not always academic, for instance, assisting learners studying general biblical terms, recognize English lectures, or reading journal articles’ the English Bible or Christian written for a lay audience. Another issue that was addressed during interview was the problems that might face theology students in their academic and professional career. One of the interviewees stressed that the use technical terms when they give different services in churches might be a big challenge. As the teaching materials did not present different terminologies of Bible and theology, the students could fail to give different services in religion areas. Regarding this issue, Darquennes and Wim (2011) stated that technical terms in theological areas are used during worshipping, praying,

preaching, and singing, and theological contexts and the setting of religious experiences like witness and negotiation, as well as the day-to-day activities like blessing and cursing, are considered. Similarly, Resane (2016) states that teaching theology needs both assertion and language technical application expertise. Theology is similar to any social science in that it needs the use of academic expressions. Theology learners should know the 'theology-specific meaning of its technical words'. Thus, these problems lead them to some challenges, in future, like failing to communicate in English with native and non-native English speakers, and failing to provide different services related to missionaries and churches.

Conclusions

Based on the major findings, the following conclusions were made. The majority of the students responded during questionnaire that they perceived the teaching materials as they did not assist them in their academic and professional contexts. Besides, the result of interview revealed that the EFL teachers perceived the teaching materials as they did not meet the students needs and interests since the contents of the materials did not have any relation with theological related English. The findings of interview revealed that the inappropriateness of the teaching materials, and the ways they were selected for attending the program which was not academic based but spirituality based were some of the identified problems. Thus, challenges that might face them in their current and future careers were identified as failing to communicate in English, failing to being serve as missionaries, failing to translate their mother tongue to English and vice versa. This is due to the inappropriateness of the teaching materials that lack technical terms in theological areas that used during worshipping, praying, preaching and singing.

Recommendations

Finally, based on the conclusions, the following recommendations were drawn.

1. Pierce (2018) states that English in theological settings must be related to the language which we commonly use in our day-to-day activities. This indicates that technical words which are commonly observed in theological English should be balanced with what people use in both contexts of the social daily activities and in theological contexts. Pierson (2003), also states that for every group of theology students, designing EBT course is considered as mandatory, and it might concentrate widely on theological expressions and grammatical structures used in the Gospel which is written in English. It is also needed for reading skills to understand course textbooks. The spoken skills consist that not only assist learners comprehend speech delivered in English but also assist the students to be taught and to work together with English native speakers and instructors. Additionally, Nuttall (1982) shows that the skills-strategies approach to course design is associated to tasks in ESP in order to develop some abilities, skills and strategies in learners. This approach plans to assist learners in enhancing their skills and the strategies not only while the ESP course, but after it. Thus, the researcher recommended that the designed tasks and activities in ESP

teaching materials in theological context should balance and consider both general English and theological English.

2. The study indicated that the identified problems might lead them not to give different church related services appropriately. Concerning to this, Alimorad and Mandana (2012) states that it is an obligation to consider inappropriateness between students' background, students' prior knowledge, students' needs and the level of materials during designing teaching materials since these lead them to failure. Thus, it is recommended that to reduce the problems related to theology students, the seminary or theological college should select the trainees based on their academic performance rather than choosing them based on their spirituality matters since theological colleges are considered as academic contexts.
3. As both students and EFL instructors perceived the skills presented in the teaching materials didn't satisfy the needs and interests of diploma theology students, the researcher recommended that preparing teaching materials that fit the needs and interests of the students.

Appendix A: Interview questions

I. Perceptions related questions

1. What types of contents needed in the ESP or in the field of theology?
2. Do your students want to learn the skills presented in the modules? Why?
3. Do you think that the skills needed for theology students are included in the current ELT materials?
4. What can you say about your students' perception about the current modules for their success in academic and occupational areas? Why?
5. Do you think the skills which are presented in the modules satisfy your students' needs and interests? Why?

II. Problems/challenges related questions

1. Which language skills or sub-skills are your students interested in, and don't interested in?
2. In which language skills do your students have problems? Why?
3. Could you please describe the problems that hinder your students not to be successful in their academic and professional areas?
4. What types of contents should be taught in the ESP courses to study/work effectively in the field of theology for both current and future career? Why?
5. What challenges do theology students face in both academic and professional areas if they use the current ELT materials?

Appendix B: Questionnaire

| Items | Scales | | | | |
|--|--------|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 The materials assist you to recognize and learn the fundamental concepts of English theological thinking | | | | | |
| 2 The materials help you to use English as a tool for missionary purposes in order to present biblical truth, consult believers, and interact within church settings | | | | | |
| 3 The modules help you to understand theological articles, Bibles and books written in English | | | | | |
| 4 The teaching materials are concerned with the principles of CLT | | | | | |
| 5 The modules are compatible to your needs and interests | | | | | |

N.B: 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly Disagree 5. Can't decide.

Abbreviations

AAU: Addis Ababa University; EECMY: Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus; EFL: English as a Foreign Language; ESP: English for specific purposes; MoE: Ministry of Education.

Authors' information

Wakgari Deressa Agemso is an EFL instructor at Mettu University. He is also currently a PhD candidate at Jimma University, Ethiopia. He has three different international publications. Dr. Yohannes Tefera is a TEFL instructor at Jimma University, Ethiopia. He has also many international publications. Similarly, Dr. Adege Alemu is also a TEFL instructor at Jimma University, Ethiopia. He has also published different international publications. Both Dr. Yohannes Tefera and Dr. Adege Alemu have been playing the roles of advisor ship.

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Authors' contributions

WD wrote the main manuscript as a whole. Both Dr. YT and Dr. AA have been playing the roles of advisors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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Declarations

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The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author details

¹Department of English Language and Literature, Mettu University, P.O Box 318, Mettu, Ethiopia. ²Department of English Language and Literature, Jimma University, Jimma, Ethiopia.

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