From perceived needs to material design: Users evaluating the effectiveness of a self-developed English for MICE textbook in a Taiwan hospitality and tourism university

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Abstract

Responding to the need of MICE professionals to be well equipped with competent language skills and sufficient field knowledge, an *English for MICE* textbook was designed to achieve these purposes and evaluated from the users' viewpoints. The major results indicate that the textbook achieves its main aims of accommodating learners' needs for language and knowledge. It succeeds in helping them enhance the four English skills required in MICE situations to a satisfactory level. Besides, the users obtain basic understandings of MICE operations, thus increasing their motivation and confidence in working in the MICE-related industry in the future.

Keywords: ESP, MICE, textbook design, user evaluation, perceived needs

Background

Currently, more English textbooks are taking a specific purpose (ESP) approach, due to the fact that most of the English language textbooks available for college students are designed for general English purposes without taking learners' specific needs into full consideration (Harwood, 2005; Wang & Goodman, 2013). ESP-oriented material design and lesson planning have, thus, attracted much attention from practitioners in EFL contexts (Almagro Esteban & Vallejo Martos, 2002). Derham, Long, and Frew (2012) emphasized that students should be exposed to real problems and projects as authentic experiences are vital for them to become better prepared to enter related industries on graduation.

MICE is the abbreviation of Meetings, Incentive travel, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE). The role of the MICE service industry in the current economy has been widely acknowledged (Su, 2010) because MICE promotes national competitiveness and enhances trade, finance, transportation and travel to hotels, catering and design (Meet Taiwan News, 2013). Lin and Wan (2010) pointed out that the MICE industry is one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry today, and they highlighted the importance of providing a well-trained and highly qualified work force, so a full

alignment between the worker skill sets, industry demands, and education and training must be offered by the academic institutions.

Along with the completion of the Kaohsiung Exhibition Centre, the Kaohsiung City Government is attempting to develop southern Taiwan's MICE industry by coordinating major international events in this newly-constructed venue. Responding to the urgent need of qualified MICE professionals to be well equipped with both competent language skills and sufficient field knowledge, the researchers designed a tailor-made *English for MICE* textbook to achieve the above purposes. This study aims to evaluate this ESP textbook from the users' viewpoints.

Literature review

Due to the effects of globalised economics, university students nowadays are required to be fully equipped with employability and mobility for the future job market; university graduates are expected to have not only professional content knowledge but also proficient skills in order to move freely across borders (Coleman, 2006; Yang, 2015). Thus, a number of innovative educational reforms, approaches or methods accommodating these needs have rapidly emerged during the past few decades. Integrating language learning with content knowledge is one of these major changes in English language teaching (ELT). Teaching English for specific purposes (ESP) is becoming a popular dominant aim of the English language curriculum in Taiwan tertiary education, in particular, in polytechnic universities (Chen, 2014). Hence, preparing English teaching materials or books contextually tailor-made to teach learners specific language skills required in special situations has also become essential in carrying out ESP teaching. Although doubts about using a standard textbook in language teaching have been raised by some researchers (e.g., Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Howard, 2005), the advantages of designing a textbook and then adopting it in the classroom are still numerous and common, in particular for the teaching of new knowledge. For example, textbooks can represent the core visibility of the course, serve as resources or indicators for selfdirected learning, learning progress, and teaching objectives, and provide sufficiently concrete inputs to meet learners' certain needs (Cunningsworth, 1995; Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; Hycroft, 1998; Sheldon, 1988). That is, textbooks can make the knowledge visible and approachable to learners in a selected, easy and organised way (Tok, 2010).

As one of the most prominent features of ESP development, an increasing number of English instructors are taking a specific purpose approach to designing their textbooks for international or local use (Iranmehr, Erfani & Davari, 2010; McDonough & Shaw, 2012), aiming to both promote students' English competence and enrich their professional knowledge of related industries. Analysing needs in the target situations is always the starting point in the design of an ESP syllabus and its materials. Differing from general English courses (EG) where learners' needs have always been existent, needs in ESP, in contrast, are aware or perceived by some sort. A number of methods can be adopted to collect information about those perceived needs such as questionnaires, interviews, observation, or consultations with sponsors, learners and others (Hutchinson & Walters, 1987). It is not uncommon to assess the target needs based on ESP practitioners' awareness or the

domination of the institutes and authorities, in particular, in Asian contexts where the overall approach to syllabus design is usually 'top-down' in nature. For instance, Edwards (2000) designed an ESP syllabus and materials for business in a Japanese university on the basis of the school director's advice and personal needs analysis. Similarly, in designing an ESP course for Japanese employees, Cowling (2007) identified needs also partially built on the company director's request and the language teachers' perceptions.

Bouzidi (2009) described a three-step method to help teachers recognize and rectify the mismatch between the content of ESP textbooks and actual workplace language demands: (1) collect data about the needs of employees and employers, (2) use that data to evaluate classroom material—in this case an ESP textbook for English language learners who work in the local Moroccan hospitality industry, and (3) supplement the ESP textbook to make it more relevant to the employment setting. Iranmehr, Erfani, and Davari (2010) investigated the current status of the Iranian ESP textbooks published by the Organisation for Research and Compiling University Textbook in Humanities (SAMT), the main governmental organisation in studying and compiling ESP university textbooks. The author identified five main drawbacks including lack of needs analysis, mono-skill syllabus, inflexible and clichéd patterns, lack of material revision, and insufficient visual aids. They suggested that performing a needs analysis is the first step in preparing ESP textbooks. Furthermore, new ESP teaching approaches such as task-based exercises and activities should be included in the textbooks, along with the use of precise words and visual aids. Last but not least, ESP teachers and instructors' experiences, observations, needs and expectations should be respected.

Regarding ESP textbook evaluation, most researchers agree that the textbook must achieve the objectives of ESP instruction to increase the learners' interest and motivation (Davari, Iranmehr, & Erfani, 2013; Maryam & Haghighi, 2014; McDonough & Shaw, 2012). Besides, textbook evaluations also help identify the strengths and weaknesses of the content (Sheldon, 1988). Mukundan, Hajimohammadi, and Nimehchisalem (2011) pointed out that many identical evaluative criteria have been developed to examine similar dimensions such as the physical attributes of textbooks (aims, layout, methodology, and organization), language skills (speaking, listening, etc.), sub-skills (grammar, vocabulary, etc.), and functions for different socio-cultural settings. With the growth of the hospitality and tourism industry, more ESP materials related to this area have been published. For example, Leong and Li (2012) displayed an analysis of the stakeholders' needs and wants in Macau. Four suggestions were provided on the basis of the study results, including arranging indepth exchanges to motivate students' English learning initiative, applying new teaching methods, customising individual training, and improving the English-learning environment, to improve Tourism Management English teaching. Wang and Goodman (2013) also took the ESP-based textbook Restaurant English as its object of study, and the inquiry was divided into two sections. First, the authors investigated the design of the textbook by doing needs analyses and eliciting experts' feedback on the contents. Second, instructors using the textbook in their classes were asked to evaluate the book by means of an evaluation form. In attempting a combination of multiple stakeholders' perspectives, their study worked towards a fuller understanding of the issues of design and practicality in ESP-based education. Still, users' perspectives were not included in their study.

However, empirical research on evaluating contextualised ESP materials or textbooks is still rather underrepresented in Taiwan, in particular, investigations of the major stakeholders', that is the users', opinions and attitudes. Thus, to bridge this gap, the present study aims to examine whether a group of ESP learners was satisfied with and agreed on the effects and purposes a self-designed ESP textbook was targeted to achieve. The process of the present evaluation is summative based on the insiders' views in order to gauge the usefulness and effectiveness of the course, and also aimed to make possible improvements in subsequent versions of republishing the book (Baleghzadeh & Rahimi, 2011; Robinson, 1991).

Methodology

The ESP book: English for MICE

The book used for evaluation was designed by the teaching faculty of a national hospitality and tourism university in Taiwan, all of whom are English language teachers teaching ESP courses in the Department. The book consists of four major topics, i.e. meetings, incentive travel, conventions, and exhibitions. In each topic, there are four units, with 12 units in total (see Appendix 1 for its aims and scope and a sample unit). The book features a variety of useful real-life dialogues and hands-on activities that will help learners sharpen their English skills and build confidence in using English for MICE purposes. Each unit contains warm up questions which offer insight into the upcoming lesson and act as a general overview of the unit. The two dialogues reflect real-life scenarios that one may encounter in real MICE situations, in which learners are expected to effectively grasp important phrasing and keywords. A listening practice is also provided to test users' listening proficiency and help immerse them in an all-English learning environment. Furthermore, each unit also offers several questions for discussion; the questions are problem-oriented to challenge learners to think more deeply and thus develop their problem-solving skills. By the end of each unit, two communicative activities are designed to help students deal with practical problems and operate what they have been taught in specific MICE situations. Finally, the Internet resources as well as unit assessments, power point slides, and test answers are also supplied in a DVD to instructors to assist their teaching.

The book was published in 2014 and then used for the first time in September 2014 for one semester (18 weeks). It is intended to be adopted in a compulsory course, English for MICE, in the Applied English Department of the University. It is the policy of the Department to use this self-designed ESP book in each fall semester for the final year students.

The participants

The first users of the book were the final year English-major students in the aforementioned university. They were all enrolled for this compulsory course in fall 2014. In May 2015, they were invited to complete the questionnaire survey evaluating the book after its first use. The Department requires all graduates to pass a benchmark of English proficiency tests before graduation, i.e. TOEIC

750 (equivalent to CEFR B2), so the target audience of the book is those students with English proficiency of TOEIC 750, although the average score of the present graduates was 810. All of them had successfully completed a one-year industrial placement in their third year of study as this is a requirement of the sandwich curriculum of the University. The industries where they had their placements were mainly tourism- and hospitality- related, but none of them had had their placement in the MICE industry. The demographic information of the student participants is tabulated in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

The teacher instructing the course is one of the book designers and also one of the researchers of the present study. He is a Taiwanese language teacher and has approximately ten years' experience of teaching English for specific purposes. It is believed that the material developers as practitioners and researchers can position the researchers as insiders to better reflect the voices of the contextual particularities in a language classroom. In addition, another core writer of the book who is currently teaching English at tertiary level was also invited to take part in an interview. The interview mainly focused on the following perspectives: the initiatives made to develop the materials, the procedures of conducting the needs analysis, the increment of content reliability, feedback from any users, and directions for future revisions, if any. The interview lasted for around one hour and was conducted in Mandarin Chinese to facilitate contributions and avoid likely misunderstanding. The interview was transcribed by the interviewer and checked by the other researcher of the present study who is a native Taiwanese professor, teaching English at the same institution.

Table 1: Genders

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative P.
Valid	Female	42	87.5	87.5	87.5
	Male	6	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: TOEIC scores

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative P.
Valid	550-750	7	14.6	14.6	14.6
	751-880	36	75.0	75.0	89.6
	>880	5	10.4	10.4	100.0
	 Total	48	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: Jobs of interest after graduation (multiple choices) (%) n=48

Aviation	F&B	Hotel	Tourism	MICE	English
39.6	22.9	43.8	20.8	20.8	56.3

The instrument and analysis

An evaluation form was designed, asking the users to judge the book according to six main categories, namely, the development of linguistic skills, content and organisation, affective domains, physical characteristics, material design and section analysis, consisting of 38 items on a five-point Likert scale (ranging from five, strongly agree, to one, strongly disagree) and three open-ended questions. The questionnaire was written in Chinese for the students' easy comprehension, but an English version is provided in the Appendix 2 for reference. The questionnaire is divided into two major sections, namely, respondent's demographic information and the textbook evaluation question items. The 41s question are categorised under the headings of language skills, content and organisation, affective domains, physical features, material design, unit analysis, and open-ended questions, respectively. The questionnaire was proofread for its readability and comprehensibility by two colleagues and piloted by three students before its formal administration. All 48 questionnaires were returned, reaching a 100% response rate, and the Cronbach's alpha for the reliability of the questionnaire was 0.960. With the help of the statistical software, SPSS, descriptive analyses, t-tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were performed to analyse the results to examine whether significant differences existed in the participants' perceptions of the different variables.

Results and discussion

The identification of needs in English for MICE

Performing a needs analysis is always one of the most important steps in designing ESP materials. The present textbook adopted a top-down approach. MICE is a growing industry in the local city and although a content course entitled 'Introduction to the MICE Industry' is periodically offered in Mandarin Chinese in the present context, the new course, 'English for MICE' was officially integrated into the curriculum by the course committee, based on the decision of the teachers rather than the learners. Following the tradition of using self-designed ESP course books about hospitality and tourism, the Department decided to design a new textbook to meet this new demand. Initially, the Chair of the Department designed two units of English for meetings for instruction in her language course, focusing on training learners' communication skills in the target settings; thus, the units mainly include simulated conversation practice, group discussion, and communicative tasks. After its success and recognition by the students, the course was expanded to cover the four topics, that is, MICE.

Since the decision was made using a top-down approach, the design of each topic was also determined by the material writers without consulting the potential users. Therefore, the needs analysis conducted in this case was based on the curriculum design and the committee's consensus. After assigning the tasks of developing the materials, the three teachers carried out research on what content should be included. The on-line resources offer many clues as to what issues should be addressed, and the sections of each unit followed the previous successful meeting materials, still primarily developing specific communicative language skills and problem-solving used for the targeted situations. Besides, industry experts also helped proofread the content to ensure its

accuracy and validity. In other words, as the core writer remarked, "It is teachers who assume the language skills our students may need in order to work successfully in the MICE industry. It's a decision made from a top-down perspective, instead of a bottom-up approach of surveying learners' opinions, and this is rather a common way of developing course curricula and designing materials in the Taiwanese educational culture."

The development of linguistic skills

Generally, a majority of the respondents perceived that the book was able to develop their four linguistic skills, vocabulary size and grammar knowledge (see Table 4). Since the book is conversation-based and contains practical MICE content knowledge, the question items of improving listening skills and vocabulary size received higher agreement. It is interesting that although training reading and writing skills were not the intended focus of the book, they still attracted a certain extent of agreement. This is probably due to the fact that in class the students were required to do extracurricular readings on each topic provided in the learning resources, namely, the relevant Internet websites, write reports and then make oral presentations in class, which indirectly also trained their writing and reading skills. However, the results also indicate that the chances of practicing speaking should be increased to balance the slightly overwhelming practices of receptive skills in the future revision.

Table 4: Developing English language skills (%) n=48

	5	4	3	2	1	
listening skills	13	60	25	2	0	
speaking skills	15	25	48	10	2	
reading skills	8	31	46	13	2	
writing skills	6	13	50	27	4	
vocabulary size	19	52	25	4	0	
grammar knowledge	6	25	50	13	6	

Note: 5: Strongly agree, 1: strongly disagree. Differences in total due to rounding.

Grammar knowledge was seemingly not developed, according to the respondents. Owing to the intended users and the aims targeted by the book, teaching grammar is not the main aim of this conversation-based ESP book and furthermore the present participants' grammar competency has reached a proficient level; hence, this item received relatively less agreement. However, this result also partially supports the assumption that teaching English for specific purposes might gain better effects when the target audience consists of higher proficiency English users who have been equipped with a stronger base of general language competence (Akbarian, 2010; Hutchinson & Walters, 1987).

Content and organisation of the book

When asked to make an overall evaluation of the content and organization of the book, the users obviously showed much higher agreement with this category than in the previous section (see Table 5). ESP textbooks are developed for specific purposes and used by a specific group of users; therefore, clear aims and a specific scope are indispensable. Needs analysis, a key instrument in ESP course design, usually helps greatly in deciding a definite aim and scope of the designed materials and also in ensuring its rationale for appropriateness, adoption and future success of implementation (West, 1994).

Table 5: Evaluation of content and organisation (%) n=48

	5	4	3	2	1	
Having clear aims and scope	17	46	27	10	0	
Containing appropriate difficulty	21	48	27	4	0	
Offering sufficient MICE knowledge	25	42	21	13	0	
Having a coherent organisation	19	44	31	6	0	
Teaching intercultural knowledge	13	46	27	15	0	
Fitting the future job needs	15	46	29	10	0	
Providing authentic MICE usages	21	44	31	4	0	

Note: 5: Strongly agree, 1: strongly disagree. Differences in total due to rounding.

In addition, since ESP aims to teach learners English used in specific situations, conventional language usages, in particular the lexis, and the required essential understandings of the working venues, are commonly included in textbooks. The present book not only teaches language but also addresses content knowledge in the MICE industry, which makes the users believe that what they have learnt is authentic and relevant to their future needs. Moreover, due to the developing stage of the MICE industry in the present studied scenario, the materials in the book rely heavily on the references from internationally highly-developed MICE industry countries, together with consulting experts' views on improving the authenticity of the content. These efforts were made to raise the learners' intercultural awareness while learning or working in the MICE industry since being equipped with an internationalised mind-set is a requisite for working in this field.

Evaluation of affective domains

Affective variables in a learning environment have been confirmed as having a close association with learners' subject achievements (McComas, 1996). In second language classes, learners' various attitudes as well as external variables regarding what they are learning can account for their differentiated learning outcomes (Brown, 1973). Table 6 displays the results of evaluating the affective domains of the book, i.e. users' feelings about and perceived value of the book. A majority of the respondents perceived that the book was able to increase their motivation to learn English for MICE and their confidence in using it in the future. Although only around 20% of the participants chose MICE as one of their future job choices, over half felt that their interest in engaging in MICE

was enhanced as a result of using the book. Similarly, the majority also believed that their confidence in using the specific language in MICE situations had also increased, which can partially prove the book's initial success in reaching one of its aims.

Table 6: Evaluation of affective domains (%) n=48

The book has increased my	5	4	3	2	1
understanding of the MICE industry	19	48	31	2	0
interest in engaging in MICE jobs	8	44	40	8	0
motivation to learn English	17	35	33	15	0
motivation to learn MICE content knowledge	10	44	31	15	0
confidence in using English for MICE	10	46	29	15	0
confidence in engaging in MICE jobs	17	33	35	15	0
English proficiency used in the MICE industry	17	52	29	2	0

Note: 5: Strongly agree, 1: strongly disagree. Differences in total due to rounding.

However, caution needs to be taken in attributing these positive attitudes solely to the adoption of the book as their perceived value and expressed feelings may stem from many other external factors such as teachers' instructional strategies, learning environment, institutional policies or even social expectations. Further exploration of these other possible contributing factors is beyond the research scope of the present study. In other words, a book designed with specific aims and scope and then used by the targeted audience with a similar interest such as a self-designed ESP textbook can more effectively reach its set course goals.

Physical characteristics of the book

The physical characteristics of a textbook may have little to do with judging its actual value, but as previously mentioned, they still affect how learners feel about the book to some extent as an affective variable. Thus, physical characteristics such as durability, attractiveness, clarity, printing quality, layout, etc. have generally been used as one criterion to evaluate ESL/EFL textbooks in a checklist list since the 1990s (e.g., Ansary & Babaii, 2002; Mukundan & Ahour, 2010).

Table 7: Evaluation of physical features (%) n=48

	5	4	3	2	1
The design and layout of the book is motivating.	10	29	54	4	2
The book is easily portable.	13	42	40	6	0
Pictures and content match each other.	19	35	40	6	0
The price of the book is affordable.	10	31	29	22	6

Note: 5: Strongly agree, 1: strongly disagree. Differences in total due to rounding.

The results reveal that a majority of the users are happy with its portability and graphic design but have a rather more reserved attitude towards its layout and price (see Table 7). These two concerns have to be negotiated with the book publisher, and possible changes can be made in future editions as this is closely related with the publisher's marketing strategies which is beyond the control of the authors.

Evaluation of the material designs

Table 8 shows the users' overall judgment of the book and its individual topic. Overall, a majority of the students believed that the content offers chances for interactive learning, and represents multi-modality. Each unit of the book provides several communicative activities which require not only the learners' deployment of linguistic skills, but also interaction with peers to complete the tasks together with the heavy use of multi-media such as the Internet resources in class, which makes the users mostly agree with the quality of the book's interaction and multimodality. In a learning environment offering many digital devices, knowledge is constructed not only from the language in the book but also from the multiple modes it is associated with, and this would crucially develop learners' new literacy (Albers & Harste, 2007). Yet, the respondents expressed relatively less agreement with the items of extra learning resources and the book being challenging. The former situation can be improved by providing more resources in the future editions, but it is unclear what criteria the students based their judgments on regarding the challenges of the book. In other words, we are unsure whether their evaluation was made according to the language part, the content part or both. Apparently, Krashen's (1981, 1985) theory of input hypothesis in which language inputs to learners should be one level higher than their current level could be very helpful in improving the book.

Table 8: Evaluation of material design (%) n=48

	5	4	3	2	1
The content is challenging and inspiring	8	35	42	15	0
The content is interactive and multi-modal	13	50	33	4	0
The assessment is multiple	8	42	40	10	0
Extra learning resources are sufficient	10	31	46	10	2
I am satisfied with the design of the meetings units	13	40	40	8	0
I am satisfied with the design of the incentive travel units	13	35	48	4	0
I am satisfied with the design of the conventions units	13	29	54	4	0
I am satisfied with the design of the exhibitions units	10	38	48	4	0

Note: 5: Strongly agree, 1: strongly disagree. Differences in total due to rounding.

In evaluating the four main topics of the book individually, the students did not show as high agreement as they did for the other evaluation items, in particular, the four convention units attracted relatively less agreement. It is supposed that English for MICE is probably still very new to these students, in particular the content knowledge; thus, they may have higher expectations of it deeply addressing MICE knowledge in English. However, an ESP book is still supposed to be language skills oriented and thus we believe it is crucial for instructors and learners to form an identical understanding of the goals of using any ESP textbook in the very beginning of ESP courses as sometimes learners may confuse ESP courses where language skills are the major focus to be learnt for use in specific situations with content courses which are delivered in English (EMI).

Evaluation of sections of units

The last section of the survey required the users to evaluate the design of each section in a unit and the results show that a majority of them showed a high degree of satisfaction with most of the sections, with the highest in the listening comprehension test design while the lowest was in the extra learning resources (see Table 9). Their responses are correlated to the results of the previous items. The present users welcomed the test which helped to assess their learning and thus demanded a greater variety of assessments to be included in the book. Once again, the results indicate that there is much room for improvement in the section of extra learning resources. One possible method of improvement is to combine assessment and extra learning resources. The writers can provide more opportunities for assessment as extra learning materials for users' selfstudy. However, it needs to be noted that these responses and suggested changes may not be able to be generalised to other contexts. Using an ESP textbook in class not only aims to teach learners language used for specific purposes, but also has to accommodate various learners' needs from context to context. This highlights the necessity and importance of planning, developing, using and then evaluating an ESP course book in a local context.

Table 9: Evaluation of unit sections (%) n=48

I am happy with the design of the	5	4	3	2	1
warm-up activities	13	44	35	8	0
conversation practices	8	46	40	6	0
question discussion	17	33	42	8	0
listening comprehension tests	19	42	38	2	0
communicative activities	10	40	48	2	0
extra learning resources	10	38	46	4	2

Note: 5: Strongly agree, 1: strongly disagree. Differences in total due to rounding.

Significant differences by the variables

In general, the results show that there were not many significant differences in evaluating the book by the variables. However, several significant differences were still found. For instance, when comparing the gender groups, the male students showed a significantly higher agreement with the book providing sufficient MICE content knowledge than the females did (t=3.063, <.05). One possible reason accounting for this variation might be that the male students had seldom been previously taught any content knowledge about MICE and thus the ESP book containing MICE knowledge would be deemed novel in terms of providing sufficient professional MICE knowledge.

However, it should be noted that the unequal numbers of male and female students in the present study may have affected the results. Another major difference is that the respondents with varying levels of English proficiency showed significantly different agreement with the book improving their listening skills (F(2:45)=4.296, p<.05), where the group with the highest English proficiency (n=5, with TOEIC scores of more than 880) had less agreement than the other two groups (n=36, n=7). Compared to the target audience of the book with TOEIC scores of around 750, those who had a relatively better command of English naturally would have a higher expectation of what the book can offer them, which also indicates the dilemma of using standard textbooks in an mixed ability class.

Opened-ended responses

The questionnaire survey also offered the students chances to write comments about the book, but only a few students took this opportunity to express their opinions. One suggested addressing more authentic usage, in particular terminology, and providing more chances for practicing in real MICE situations in the book. The respondent believed it would be more useful if what they learnt in the book could be practically implemented and verified in simulated MICE situations. This suggestion is useful for instructors in modifying teaching practices and increasing the users' agreement with the authenticity of the content. This comment also mirrors the fact that it is rather difficult to evaluate a textbook simply based on its content as instructors' teaching performance, that is, how practitioners teach the content, may also crucially affect the users' judgement of the book.

Another concern is about the insufficient provision of MICE knowledge, as remarked by a small number of students. As discussed in the preceding paragraphs, ESP is to teach language used in specific situations, but learners may mistakenly place the acquisition of content knowledge as a priority. They might confuse the three teaching approaches, namely, ESP (English for Specific Purposes), EMI (English Used as a Medium of Instruction) and CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) and thus have misplaced expectations of the course. Indeed, during the interview with the core material writer, she expressed a very similar concern after her trial use in another institution. She stated that ESP learners already equipped with better command of English language would usually expect not only an increment in language competence but also the acquisition of content knowledge in an ESP course. To avoid this possible confusion, the teachers can clarify the aims with all the learners before the course and discuss together with them to determine the learners' expected outcomes of the course. Another alternative is as the interviewee suggested, "In the future revision, probably terminology and short reading articles about the content knowledge can be added as supplementary resources in the book to introduce to learners the developments and trends of the MICE industry."

Conclusions and implications

Conclusions

This study investigated 48 English majors' perceptions of a self-designed ESP textbook (English for MICE) in a national polytechnic university of Taiwan using a questionnaire survey. The results reveal that in general most of the users agreed that the book improved their linguistic skills, provided sufficient content knowledge about MICE, and increased their motivation to learn both the language and content. In addition, they also believed that the content offers chances for interaction and multi-modalities, and they showed a stronger preference for doing the listening comprehension tests in each unit. However, their responses also indicate that the content may be less challenging and the extra learning resources may not be sufficient for them.

When comparing the different groups' attitudes, it was found that the male students had higher agreement with the content knowledge provided by the book, while the higher English proficiency users showed significantly less satisfaction with the listening tests in each unit. Also, in their open-ended comments, some users suggested the integration of content and language learnt in the book with simulated operations and practice. In other words, the book has achieved initial success in building up the users' confidence in using specific language and professional knowledge appropriately in future MICE situations, but the results also mirror the fact that users' evaluation of a textbook will be affected by practitioner's teaching performance to some extent, and thus a longitudinal and wider investigation is required.

Since the present research is the first evaluation of the self-designed ESP textbook, several studies can be done to complement it in the future. For instance, the present study is quantitative research and more qualitative methods such as interviews or class observations can be adopted to gain a deeper understanding of how users' and practitioners' evaluate the book, why the judgments are made and how the book is actually used in ESP classes. A closer look at practitioner's teaching performance in class may help uncover the reliability of users' evaluation. Another possible direction is to involve all the book writers in the research. Their reflections on the intentions of planning and designing the content could be compared to users' responses to measure if there is a (mis)match between the writers' expectations and realisation. Finally, when the book reaches a wider audience, an investigation of other hospitality and tourism majors' evaluation of the book can also be conducted to see if users' majors and their perceived needs (Ghany & Latif, 2012) would be a significant variable influencing what they expect from the book and how they judge its effects.

Implications

The study has the following pedagogical implications. First, usually ESP materials are developed by language teachers, but are always associated with the subject-matter to varying extents, no matter whether the content is what is to be taught or if it is simply the carrier of all the language content (Allwright, 1981). Thus, it is advised that field experts or content teachers can be invited to engage in the development of ESP curricula and materials (Hsu, 2014). Such close cooperation ensures not only the specific linguistic skills to be taught but also the accommodation of applicable content knowledge in real situations.

Second, the success of adopting ESP textbooks heavily relies on how they are used in ESP classes; hence, ESP practitioners' qualifications and teaching performance need to be well-suited to the course. Although ESP is still language-oriented, the subject-matter is still integrated into the teaching. This requires ESP practitioners to be equipped with a certain level of content knowledge; thus, the development of a second-expertise in subject-matter other than language teaching has apparently become a requirement for ESP teachers. Since most ESP courses are rather contextbased, it is suggested that the situated institutions which conduct ESP courses can offer chances for language teachers to develop their subject-matter knowledge. In-house training such as workshops, lectures or observations of content courses is one direction.

In addition, ESP teaching methods such as the current CLT approaches should be communicative, cooperative and learner-centred where ESP learners work as partners with each other in a cooperative venture (Brown, 1991). The activities of problem-solving in simulated situations, requiring the operation of language and content knowledge to achieve the specific purpose could be one ideal way to have learners practice and apply what they have learnt in ESP courses, which would also help increase both learners' motivation in the course and its relevance to meeting their future needs. Besides, the instruction of ESP courses should cooperate with the opportunities of demonstrating professional knowledge and hands-on language skills in real MICE scenarios. ESP practitioners are advised to arrange chances for learners to participate, observe and help in real MICE situations to reinforce the relevance of the learning and the application of the content.

Finally, due to the fact of pursuing globalisation and enhancing graduates' competitiveness, weighting the balance of English and subject-matter teaching in courses has become a major concern for many EFL Asian universities. Since the novel approach of CLIL, which caters for both language and content learning, has been extensively adopted in many European contexts and has gained positive results and also quickly spread to Asian contexts (see Yang, 2014, 2015), the benefits of single-focused ESP courses may be questioned by learners. For instance, English for MICE (ESP) and MICE in English (CLIL) may look similar but the focuses are in fact rather divergent. Yet, learners may not be able to clearly distinguish their differences and may have unreal expectations of the courses, which would accordingly affect the evaluation results of the book or course in a negative way. Hence, what types of course should be ESP-oriented or CLIL-oriented and why the decision is made have to be clearly addressed to both teachers and learners to avoid possible confusion and improper expectations.

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CONTENTS MAP

Theme	Unit	Page	Function
PART	Meeting Consultation	08	Arranging meetingsPreparing equipment and booking venues
Meetings	Pre-meeting Arrangements	16	Booking a suitable interpreterArranging transportation for speakers
	Troubleshooting	22	Solving mishapsBrainstorming solutions
	Post-meeting Evaluation	28	Retrospection and evaluationLearning from mistakes
	Service Inquiries	36	 Arranging incentive travel Inquiring about an incentive travel package
Incentive Travel	Special Arrangements	42	 Dealing with special requests for a tailor-made incentive travel package
Traver	Dealing With Accidents and Emergencies	48	 Dealing with imprompturequests Dealing with unforeseen accidents
	Confirming Arrangements and Dealing With Complaints	54	 Confirming arrangements with working partners Responding to complaining clients

Conversations	Listening Practice	Activities
Venue bookingConfirmation—conversation between colleagues	• Equipment check	Arranging meetingsConfirming meeting details
Interpreter arrangementHow do they get here?	Going through the checklist	Hiring an interpreter Preparing a checklist for an ideal meeting
Problem—looking for plan BProblem—urgent place change	Meeting mishaps	Writing a meeting agenda Problems and solutions
Follow up: meeting receptionLooking back and plan forward	• What do the questionnaires say?	 Key skills for facilitating a meeting The qualities of a good meeting facilitator
Introducing what MICE is aboutService offered in MICE	Discussing incentive travel details	 Creating a company profile for incentive travel Inquiring about details of a tailor-made incentive travel package
 Detailing the tailor-made product Presenting a tailor-made package 	Special requests	 Designing a travel itinerary Presenting a tailor-made package
Responding to inquiriesDealing with extra requests	Dealing with problems	 Dealing with accidents and incidents Role-play: solving problems
 Confirming the final itinerary with customers Confirming arrangements with partner hotels 	Dealing with customer complaints	Dealing with customer complaintsWriting a letter of apology to a client

Theme	Unit	Page	Function
FIFIF	Convention Planning	62	Learning about conventionsOrganizing a convention
Conventions	A Last-minute Change	68	 Dealing with crises and problems
	Composing an Invitation Letter	74	Inviting guest speakers and participantsDetails of an invitation letter
	Managing the Convention	80	Handling convention detailsDealing with unforeseen problems
	Attending a Trade Show	88	 Choosing a trade show The functions of different trade show booths
Exhibitions	Promoting Your Business at Trade Shows	94	Preparing for a trade showThe advantages of attending a trade show
	The Final Stages of Trade Show Preparation	100	Decorating a trade show boothPerforming final checks
***	Checking Out the Competition and Networking	106	Learning from competitionThe benefits of attending a trade show reception
Listening Pr	actice—Audio Scripts	112	

Conversations	Listening Practice	Activities
Where to start?Miscellaneous tasks	Dividing up responsibilities	Features of a successful conventionPlanning an international convention
A last-minute changeDouble-booking rooms	 Finding a new keynote speaker 	Last-minute changes and solutions Problem-solving skills
Drafting invitation lettersComposing an invitation letter	Writing a press release	Writing an invitation letter to a guest speakerDrafting a press release
One-off convention helpersRegistration	 Reorganizing the program schedule 	 Possible unforeseen problems and recommended solutions Dealing with problems
Tips for selecting the right trade show to attendBooking a booth at the trade show	 Reasons for attending trade shows 	Planning a trade showTrade show booths
Deciding on a trade show boothPreparation for an exhibition	 Planning a trade show exhibition 	 Arranging an exhibition at a trade show Role-play: solving problems which occur at exhibitions
Setting up a trade show boothAt the final stage of the trade show presentation	 Negotiating an offer 	 Ideas for decorating a trade show booth Negotiating with trade show attendees
 Checking out the competition Approaching customers in the trade show 	Attending a trade show dinner reception	 Role-play: Acting out scenarios during a trade show Discussing networking



Warming Up

Work in pairs. Discuss these questions.

- 1 What types of people tend to make special requests?
- What types of special requests do people make?
- 3 What kinds of food-related requests are often made?
- 4 How about room/accommodation requests?
- 5 Are there any other requests besides food and accommodation?



Scenario 1

Detailing the Tailor-made Product





Good morning, Sarah. I'm Roger, the project manager in charge of this case—we spoke earlier on the phone.



Yes, thanks for coming today. I believe we have a lot to settle before we sign the contract.

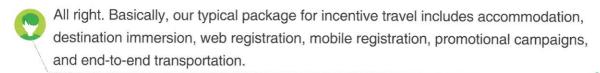


Yes, I would like to explain what items will be included in the package and how much the estimated charges will be.



Good. That's what we need to know, too.

Wenhsien Yang and Meijung Wang



- Sorry for interrupting, but do we need to print our program?
- No, you don't. We also help on production of all required program materials, attendees and VIP management, expert analysis of budget variance, logistical service, arranging all receptions, group activities, entertainment, optional tours, and décor elements as well as all catering and complete on-site program management.
- That sounds great. So, how do you charge?
- Usually, you can either let us know your needs, and then we will quote a price for you, or we can design a package based on your budget. We have specialists who help you analyze the cost and control your budget.
- Will the price be lower if we don't need some of the services?
- Well, if you don't need certain services, we respect your decision, but normally we do not refund this part from the total price. However, we'll try to see if it's possible to use the saved cost to cover other services, to make them better.
- Yes, that sounds reasonable. All right, I'm afraid I have to leave now. I have a meeting at 3:00. Do you mind if we meet up again next week? We need to talk about some special arrangements for our VIPs. My assistant will make an appointment with you later.
- Sure, no problem. Thanks a lot for your time today. See you next week.
- Yes, see you then.



Scenario 2

Presenting a Tailor-made Package





Good morning. Today I'm going to briefly present the itinerary of this trip. If you would like to ask questions at any time during the presentation, please feel free to do so.



Roger, you can begin now.



On the morning of the first day, all clients will depart at 8:00 a.m. from Kaohsiung Harbor. Our attendees will assist you for passport control and uploading personal luggage.



Excuse me. Will our secret guests travel on the ship on the same day as well?



No. They'll leave for Hong Kong the next day by air. We will have another presentation about this special itinerary later. The clients can enjoy all the free entertainment and food and beverage onboard. At night, they will attend the captain's gala dinner and enjoy a fantastic cabaret show.



Don't forget to arrange the President's welcome speech at dinner.



Yes, it's noted in the program book already. We will arrive at Hong Kong early in the morning on the second day. Then, we will have lunch at the newly opened W Hotel. In the afternoon, they can do some shopping.

David



Where are they going to shop? Will they need to take care of their own transportation?



Don't worry. We'll provide them with a number of options, and we can drop them off at any designated shopping area.



That sounds good. How about the night programs?



At night, we have the awards dinner, and that's when the special guests will show up. By the way, there is no problem with showing the company logos on the adjacent buildings as requested. All clients can clearly spot the logos as they enter the hotel.



That's great! I appreciate all of your efforts.



On the morning of the third day, they can enjoy the free facilities offered by the resorts, like the golf course, the indoor and outdoor swimming pools, the yoga room, and the nature trails. These leisure options can help rejuvenate them before they need to head back to work. And around noon, we will drive them to the airport to bring this trip to a close.



Listening Practice



Please listen to the following dialogue and answer the questions.

- __ 1 What is the main purpose of this conversation?
 - a To propose special requests.
 - **b** To finalize the itinerary.
 - © To make an appointment.
- ______ 2 What special arrangement did First Incentive Travel promise?
 - a Holding a mini golf competition on board.
 - (b) Arranging VIPs' families to be secretly escorted to Hong Kong.
 - © Providing a fantastic banquet for the reward dinner.
 - What will Roger probably do after this talk?
 - (a) Fly to Hong Kong.
 - **b** Prepare a presentation.
 - © Contact the resort hotel.





Discussion Questions

Suppose you

(student A), as a sales
representative at First Incentive
Travel, propose a package which
costs at least NT\$1,000,000, but
your client (student B) requests
a 20% discount due to budget
concerns: negotiate with your client
and then make a compromise
between the two parties.

In an itinerary
presentation, you
(student A) are asked to
accommodate several requests for
extra service by one client (student B)
for free. You need to stick to what you
are authorized to do by the company
and cannot yield: politely tell student
B why you cannot provide for
the extra requests.

V Activity 1

Please use the following chart to design an in-bound or out-bound 3-day itinerary for an incentive travel. Some information has been filled in for you.



- Transportation: Flight _______
- Accommodation:
- Meals: ______
- Morning activities:
- Afternoon activities:



- Transportation: ______
- Accommodation: Spa and Resort Hotel _______
- Meals: _____
- Morning activities: ______



- Transportation: ______
- Accommodation: ______

- Evening activities: ______



Wenhsien Yang and Meijung Wang











Prepare a short presentation about your itinerary: talk to your partner about it, and seek his/her advice to make any changes. Your partner may interrupt your presentation at any moment to ask any questions or to request clarifications.

★ For example:





Good morning, everyone. I'm Robert Keith. It's my great honor to be here to present our specially designed incentive tour for Formosa Trading Company. In the following presentation, I will go through the itinerary day by day. Firstly, we will . . .





Appendix 2: English version of the questionnaire

Users' evaluation of the self-designed ESP textbook- English for MICE

A.	Demographic information		
1.	Gender: □ F 、 □ M		
2.	TOEIC score: □ 550-750 、□ 751-880 、□ 881 and above		
3.	. Intended job industry: (3 items approximately)		
	aviation $\cdot \Box$ restaurant $\cdot \Box$ hotel $\cdot \Box$ tourism \cdot		
□ !	MICE、□ English-related、□ Others (Please sp	pecify)	
В.	English language skills (5: strongly agree	→1: strongly disagree)	
Th	e book is able to develop my		
1.	listening skills	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
2.	speaking skills	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
3.	reading skills	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
4.	writing skills	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
5.	vocabulary size	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
6.	grammar knowledge	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
C. Content and organisation			
ı	I believe the book		
1.	has clear aims and scope	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
2.	contains appropriate difficulty	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
3.	offers sufficient MICE knowledge	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
4.	has a coherent organisation	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
5.	teaches intercultural knowledge	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
6.	fits my future job needs	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
7.	provides authentic MICE usages	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
D.	Affective domains		
	I believe the book has increased my		
1.	understanding of the MICE industry	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
2.	interest in engaging in MICE jobs	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
3.	motivation to learn English	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
4.	motivation to learn MICE content knowledge	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
5.	confidence in using English for MICE	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
6.	confidence in engaging in MICE jobs	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
7.	English proficiency used in the MICE industry	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	
E. Physical features			
1.	The design and layout of the book is motivating.	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1	

2.	The book is easily portable.	□ 5 、 □ 4 、 □ 3 、 □ 2 、 □ 1			
3.	Pictures and content match each other.	□ 5 \ □ 4 \ □ 3 \ □ 2 \ □ 1			
4.	The price of the book is affordable.	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
F. I	Vlaterial design				
	agree that				
1.	the content is challenging and inspiring	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
2.	the content is interactive and multi-modal	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
3.	the assessment is multiple	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
4.	extra learning resources are sufficient	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
5.	I am satisfied with the design of the meetings units	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
6.	I am satisfied with the design of the incentive travel $% \left(1\right) =\left(1\right) \left(1\right$	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
	units				
7.	I am satisfied with the design of the conventions units	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
8.	I am satisfied with the design of the exhibitions units	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
G.	Unit analysis				
	am happy with the design of the in each				
un	it.				
1.	warm-up activities	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
2.	conversation practices	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
3.	question discussion	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
4.	listening comprehension tests	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
5.	interactive activities	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
6.	extra learning resources	□ 5 · □ 4 · □ 3 · □ 2 · □ 1			
Н	Open-ended questions (Please write your responses				
be	below)				
1.	In what ways do you believe the book can be made				
	better?				
2.	Are there any sections of the book section which you				
	believe are unnecessary?				
3.	How can the book be changed to better suit your				
	needs?				

End of the questionnaire.